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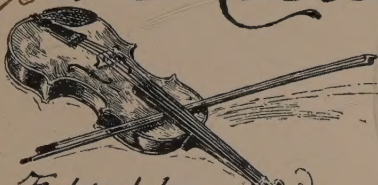




*"beautiful .....  
and like the sun."*



# The Diary of a Musician



Edited by

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*Bacon was in the Schell Hotel*

Pictures by H. Latimer Brown

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## *The Diary of a Musician*

*Jan. 20th. 182—*

*I am* so miserable that I can no longer remain in the living-room in the evenings, and listen to my father read, or take part in our concerts. To-night, I remained as long as possible without weeping. When my father sees me weep, he clasps his

# *The Diary of*

hands to his head. I am sure nobody but the most selfish person would weep in my father's presence: it makes him very miserable in his mind.

I once thought that if I could play as well upon the fiddle as my father plays on that and upon the 'cello and the clarinet and all other instruments, I should be content. I can now play as well as he. I could play as well as he a year ago, and I am more unhappy than ever before. I think it worse these winter days when there are no vegetables to cultivate. In the summer I long for greater things; but when the sun shines, and it is warm, I then believe that I will get all that I desire. In the winter my hopes are as bleak as the days. I hate the cow; I hate swine:—when the winter comes, there is nothing to do but to feed them.

I now think I shall never go to Prague. I was certain that I should go, all through the warm summer days, while I helped

# *Ca Musician*

my father set the cabbages, in the fine shiny spring—while I kept the insects from the early potato-vines: yes, even when the hay was cut in the corner meadow. Then I felt hope going, but it was not gone, and it revived again when night came, and my father read aloud, or when we had our concert. Besides, there was, as yet, something for me to learn of the fiddle; now there is more than ever; but I cannot learn it if I may not go to Prague: my father can teach me no more. I will not speak of Prague. My father knows that I must go to Prague or die. He cannot say better of it than “Sometime—perhaps”.

One day, while I was five years old, he said to my mother: “He shall go to Prague — sometime — perhaps.” **SOME-TIME! PERHAPS!**

I lie here in the storeroom to write, and I am so cold, and the smell of the oil in the lamp so disgusts me, that I cannot

# *The Diary of*

write any more. I know to-night that I shall never go to Prague. Not even "sometime—perhaps". It is no more than eight o'clock, and my father has but just begun to play. To-night he is playing on the 'cello. He plays very finely, I think. I am sure he does, although I have never heard any one else who could play at all. I can hardly endure it. It will be eleven hours before I must help feed the swine, and I shall lie awake all the night, and that will make my flesh as if there were cobwebs everywhere upon me; and before the day the bedclothes hurt my skin. I must sleep at the back of the bed—which is far better than sleeping between my brother and sister. I hope I shall soon die.

January 21, 18—

**I** HAVE read of a boy who wished to learn an especial science, and he was very poor. I think he did not have even

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a father who said to him: "Sometime, perhaps." But he went to Paris. (He was a French boy.) He lived in strange ways, and went in rags; and one day he became a great scientist.

I do not understand this thing: I am certain that he did not wish to learn anything, more than I wish to go to Prague and learn music. I am sure I should not mind going without food, or in rags, but I cannot see that I could leave my father and mother, and start for Prague, and perhaps often have to ask the drivers of carts to let me ride, or ask strange people for food,—although I could take enough in a bundle to last several days,—or perhaps I should fall ill by the roadside. That would be the worst of all—to fall ill by the roadside. I should not mind to have no medicine, or to be cold; but to be ill, without my father's tears because I suffered, and without my mother—that would be worse than dying at home with my family near.

# *The Diary of*

I could not ask the driver of a cart to let me ride: he might not wish to let me do so. I could not ask strange people for food: it might humiliate my father. If he cannot send me to Prague, he can always give us good food and enough; and if I lived to reach Prague, I could not go to some great musician, and say to him that he must teach me; because I might be told by him that I knew nothing. As I think of this thing, perhaps it is better that I never may go to Prague. Maybe the music is in my bosom. It is somewhere in me. That I know; but maybe not in my fingers nor in my head. I do not see how the boy became a great scientist without his father's help. Maybe scientists are very different from people who make music, or maybe it was because he was a Frenchman. But if I must learn my music by going alone to Prague, and telling some great artist that I am worthy to be taught; or by being ill, alone, by the



# *The Musician*

roadside—away from my father and my mother; or by riding in strange carts, or asking food of strange people, I am certain never to see Prague.

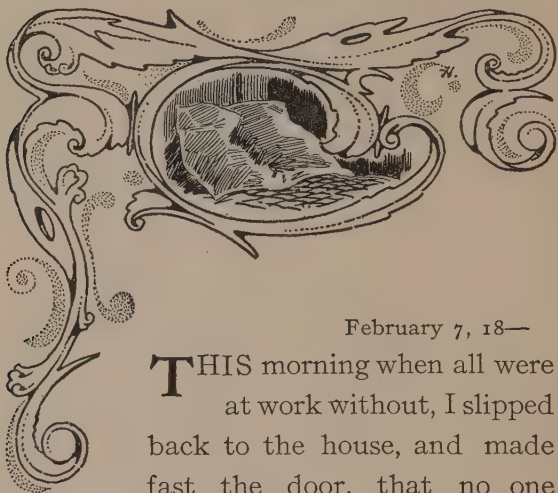
Yes! I am certain never to see Prague.  
I shall die.

February 5, 18—

**I** HELP feed the swine. I chop wood.  
I am sick.



# The Diary of



February 7, 18—

**T**HIS morning when all were at work without, I slipped back to the house, and made fast the door, that no one might return and disturb me.

I threw myself upon the bed where I and my sister and my brother sleep—with my uncle when he is here—and I snatched the pillow close, close in my arms; then I thought upon what it would be like thus to have a pillow of one's own. For years of nights, when my brother and sister have slept, I have slipped my hand beneath the pillow for a moment and tried to imagine what it would be like to

# *A Musician*

make my head entirely comfortable upon a pillow that was all my own.

Oh God! To have a pillow all my own and to go to Prague: the thoughts are becoming inseparable. Should I ever live to be as old as my father, I swear to Heaven I will have a pillow—one pillow—that is mine.

I will beg my father to tell my mother that I am to sleep in the storeroom. I will there have no pillow to tempt my imagination, and I will have peace. I may there throw out my arms.

February 9, 18—

**M**Y fourth finger is weak. It is well that I may never go to Prague. No one could become a great fiddler whose fourth finger was weak. When I use it, my little finger quivers. I would like to place my hand upon the block where I chop the wood, and cut my fingers off, one at a time. I am going to destroy something.

# *The Diary of*

I swear to almighty God that to-morrow I will kill something or destroy something that is of value to another. I will do it at sunrise. No! I will do it now!

February 28, 18—

I PUT my fist through four panes of glass, in the window of the storeroom, the last night I wrote here. After that I pushed the sacks before the place, and slept all night in the storm. My hand was cut across the back, and I like it. It is very stiff,—so that I cannot play. I did not feel the cold; if I had slept out in the snow, I should have melted a great place round about. I did not sleep a moment; I was not tired for two days. Next time I will kill something. I shall never go to Prague, but I shall do something.

My father could not have the glass put in the window, and my mother was very angry. She stuffed the holes with old

## Ca Musician

clothing and my brother's old skin cap. She was very angry. My father said: "Have a care: X—— must do something." I shall one day be that kind of a father.

March 1, 18—

THIS morning when I went to the mill for my father, I met the *statkář* on the hill. He held me by the shoulder, and he said: "Hey! Young savage! What makes you so black? You are a Romany. They say you can play on the violin." I told him no; because he said I was a Romany I would answer him no more. Perhaps he does not know that the Emperor remembers my father, and sends his man here to collect our taxes. When I spoke to my father of this, he said he could get on very well if the Emperor should forget him: that it costs a good deal to be thus especially remembered by the Emperor. But he laughed and said

# The Diary of

I was nearly as intelligent as Vaclav Kral.  
I think that I am more so.

March 2, 18—

VACLAV KRAL was in our kitchen to-night, and talking of the *statkář* on the hill. Vaclav had just paid his rent and was very angry. My father laughed at him. Vaclav said: "I would like to be *statkář*", but my father said: "You would make a poor one, Vaclav. The difference between the peasant and the aristocrat—or for that matter the *statkář*—is: the aristocrat cannot play the fiddle;—eh, X——?" I was playing while Vaclav and my father talked. Vaclav was very angry, but my father was laughing at him.

When Vaclav Kral went home, my father said:

"I laughed at him because he takes his rights and wrongs too seriously. He thinks them the only rights or wrongs in

## *Ca Musician*

the world. Do you make the best music you know, and feed the swine well in winter, and grow the vegetables in summer, and understand what you read:—then you will be an aristocrat and get all the rights you may deserve. If the aristocrat does less than his best, he, too, will get what he deserves. You see how unhappy Vaclav is? Well, do you not go through life playing your own requiem, but make scherzos for those who cannot make them for themselves.”

I know what my father meant. I will be that kind of a father one day.

March 3, 18—

**I** HAVE cut off all of my hair that I can reach, and I feel very cold, and look much smaller, but I am not so black. None shall call me a Romany or what I am not, if my deceit lies in my hair. If I could go to Prague and be a musician, it would matter nothing then, how my

## *The Diary of*

hair grew. I might then have it the easiest way. I think that one day my little finger will not quiver, when I use my fourth. I keep my fourth going by itself, inside my jacket, all of the time. SOME—time—SOME—time—SOME—time—DA—da.

March 7, 18—

**P**RAGUE! PRAGUE! Sometime. Perhaps NEVER!

March 10, 18—

**L**AST night I composed a tune. I call it "SOMETIME",—and it means PRAGUE, PRAGUE, PRAGUE. It does not say "Perhaps". It marches straight on to Prague. SOME—time—SOME—time—SOME—time—DA—da.

I played it to my father to-night, and he leaped up and stamped about the living-room, and threw back his head. He said it was a good tune, and meant something. I do not think it means anything, after all. I never mean anything except



## *Ca Musician*

when I am fiddling. I intend to mean something; but when I put my music away my purpose is past. When I composed "SOME—time—DA—da", I meant to go to Prague; but when I had finished, I knew I should never go. My father has not even said "sometime, perhaps", in more than two months.

March 26, 18—

**W**E had fresh meat for dinner.

March 27, 18—

**I** WOULD be glad to know if all the women are square at the tops and bottoms of their heads, and across their backs.

The girl at the mill asked me of the accident to my hair. She likes black hair best: she told me so. While she was speaking, I could only think how square she appeared to be.

I am the only person in this village, I think, who has black hair. I think women are very ugly in appearance. It would be

## The Diary of

impossible to think of women and of music, at the same time. When I think of women, and meet them in the road or in the fields, I think of donkeys and of pigs. A new pig is pleasanter to look upon, however, than a woman. I do not know that I ever thought of it before, but my mother is a woman, and she does not seem to me to be ugly to look upon. My father says that women are beautiful creatures, and like the sun. It is strange that he thinks thus. If women were beautiful they would not appear to me like the sun, but like the moon;—a silvery, moonlight woman might be beautiful. My father tells me of women who are different from those in our village. He used to live in Budapest when he was a young man; it may be that there is some difference in women, but even the *stat-kár's* wife is uglier than the girl at the mill. It does not make a difference to own lands and castles, and separate beds for every one in the house;—that last

# *Ca Musician*

about the *statkár's* house, I only half believe.

March 29, 18—

IT is spring again, and there is no longer any thought in my father's mind that I shall go to Prague. It is so strange a thing to see my family go about its business, tranquil and content; without a knowledge that I am suffering; without a knowledge of the distracting thoughts that are in my mind.

I can no longer eat, and I have not touched my fiddle for several weeks;—only once or twice since I cut my hand.

The swine I feed! The fearful things that one must do each day to live! And my father says: "Are you ill, X——?" I should know instantly all that was passing in the mind of one I loved. They will never know, however.



# *The Diary of*

April 3, 18—

**I** HAVE a fever day and night. If I had to sleep with my family, I should go mad. I think God will have mercy upon me. I think I shall soon die. Oh Prague! PRAGUE! PRAGUE!!!

April.

**I** DO not know the date, but I think it will be always April. Each day is as long as from here to Prague.

April.

**T**HE south lot is to be manured. I am to do the work with my father. There, the cabbages are to be set. To Hell with cabbages!

April.

**I**T is April still.

April.

**I** AM ill.

# *Ca Musician*

April.

**I** HAVE not slept in my bed for five nights. I walk sometimes, and I rest in the shed. My mother asked me of my trouble; my father looked at her and said: "St!" I think they are fools—but I would die for them.

April.

**A**PRIL. PRAGUE, PRAGUE, PRAGUE,—  
for CHRIST'S SAKE.

May.

**T**HANK God it is no longer April!

May.

**A** YEAR of May-days before me now.  
Prague! Prague!

May 10, 18—

**A**LMIGHTY God! Thy Son and the  
Holy Ghost! Keep me in my wits.  
I am going to Prague. I can say no more.



# *The Diary of*

May 12, 18—

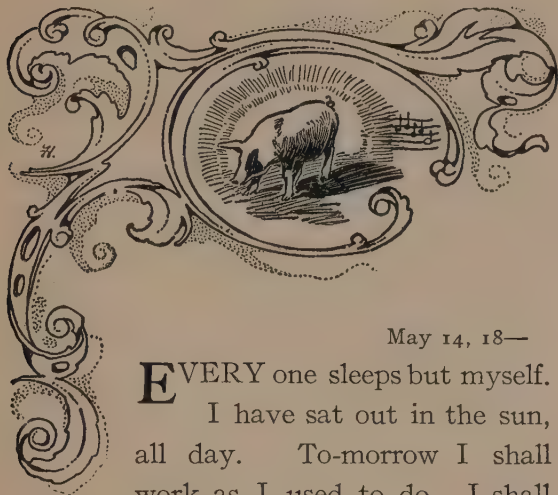
I AM dreaming, and in Paradise. I know that I am ill. Presently I must write here, all that has happened to me: the record of such happiness as mine must not be lost. Should there be a million years of suffering for my children, the knowledge of this wonderful time will help them.

May 13, 18—

I DID not know there could be so much happiness on earth. To-morrow I shall get out of bed, and go out of doors, and see if all appears as strange to me without as within.



# *The Musician*



May 14, 18—

**E**VERY one sleeps but myself.

I have sat out in the sun,  
all day. To-morrow I shall  
work as I used to do. I shall

be stronger than before. I must write of  
what has happened to me.

My father found this writing under the  
mattress, when he came to change the  
straw. He called me, and when I en-  
tered he sat upon the bed, and the tears  
were on his face. He shook the writing  
at me and said, "X——, ye shall go to  
Prague. I tell thee, my son, ye shall go  
to Prague";—then I fell upon the floor.

# *The Diary of*

I shall never forget that hour with my father. I shall one day be that kind of a father. I am to go to Prague with the money from the swine. Three years have been bad years for my father; misfortune came to everything that he planted or tried to raise to sell. If so much money can be had from the pigs in October, I am to go to Prague. The money will come.

That I should have looked at the litters last month, and wished that all were dead! —To-night, my thoughts of last month seem to be sacrilege.

Little pink pigs that shall carry me to Prague!

I shall write an idyll to little pink pigs, and the old sows shall have a Schlummerlied — they earned it last month.

From this moment, I alone shall care for them. Until I am on my way to Prague I shall eat no meat; I doubt if I



## *The Musician*

shall ever again be able to eat pork: to do so would be like devouring my benefactor. What I do not eat between now and the fall, will be so much saved of hams that must be kept for the family, and not sold. I can work, work, work—like Hercules. To-morrow I plow for my father.

Oh my father! Oh my God! Let me hasten and show my father his reward! I can understand, now, how even women are beautiful to my father: it is his generous soul, and it is the happiness his good deeds bring to him.

To-day I asked the mill-girl if she would like me to grow my hair again:—I thought it might give her pleasure. She said “Eh?” She had forgot, or maybe she no longer liked black hair. I would be glad to make something as happy as my father has made me, but that could not happen. No one can ever again be told such a thing as my father told to me:

“X——, you shall go to Prague.”

# *The Diary of*

June 2, 18—

I DO not have time to write of my emotions, as often as I used. I need not, because I am happy enough to live without reflection. I do not think I have written my meaning, but since I alone will ever read this writing, it does not matter.

When I was so hopeless, I found relief in analyzing all my emotions. To do so now would bore me. I again enjoy my father's reading. I understand that which interests him, better than I used to, because I am happier,—therefore in a more receptive mood. All things are bettered for me. Even words come more readily to my tongue. My father used to say, "X——, your speech is as poor as the land of the south field"; now he glances at me, that I may respond to his thoughts as well as to his emotions.

This happiness is a great thing.

I think I am growing, somewhat.

## *Ca Musician*

My fourth finger has almost gained its independence. I need resin and strings badly, but I shall not try to get them; every penny spent means difficulties in my way to Prague.

I have always supposed that swine preferred to wallow in filth. Happiness has taught me to understand even them, much better. A pig lies in the mud, because his nature is not understood. Our pigs now lie in clean puddles. It seems to me that it were pitiable for the glories of a great art to be allied with the squalor of a foul pig, and I thought to force decency upon these creatures that are to clear my way to Prague.

I made their pens clean, and directed the water of the stream into them. This required a great deal of hard work for many days, and my ecstasy was almost overwhelming. Each new appearance of cleanliness gave me a thrill of pleasure: it seemed to me that I was earning my

# *The Diary of*

right to Prague—and to my father. My father came often to the place where I was at work, and smoked his pipe, and smiled, and nodded his head a great deal. Once he stamped up and down before me, and sang “SOME—time—DA—da”. My father and I laugh a good deal without any cause, save that beautiful cause which comes from within. I have reached the conclusion that all wrong and wickedness are the result of unhappiness.

I had much trouble to clean the swine, after making their sties clean. I drove them, one at a time, into a small box,—away from the others; and there I washed them, with the long-handled brush which mother uses for something. She was very angry when she needed to use the brush again, but the creatures were very clean. If a low thing be made to know something better than it has known before, it will be sure to prefer that which is better,—unless the transition killed it. I can

# The Musician

imagine the result of death, because of my own experience: from my despair to my happiness, there was almost as great a change as that of the swine from filth to cleanliness.

I have divided the swine, and I feed half the young ones on one kind of food, and the other half on another kind. In a short time I shall be able to discover a difference in them, and I shall then feed to all that which is best for them.

I do not feel the lack of food for myself. I am strong, and full of some kind of power. I do not know what kind, but it is a kind that belongs to my happiness. People near me feel something of what I experience.

The air seems full of *do*! I will "do"! My father says: "Hi! little X——, if you cannot play, yet they will follow you!" This is true. I *know* it to be true. For the space of ten feet about me, every-

## *The Diary of*

thing feels it to be true:—that is because I'm happy, I dare say.

I must be as good as I know; I hope I shall do no harm. Man must destroy.—I am sure this, too, is true: there is joy in destruction. That is the devil in us. If it were God, we should not feel such despair after the destruction is complete. Little children are the only very good things; it is my purpose to have a great many.

What happiness a good and wise father can give!

June 15, 18—

**I** WONDER what was the relation of his blindness to his art. My father says, that because of his blindness and hence his isolation, his art became intensified.

June 16, 18—

**T**HE blind Hungarian musician of whom my father has told me, more and more occupies my mind.

# Ca Musician

June 17, 18

IF blindness helped make a musician great, it were easy enough to put oneself into the way to become supreme.

June 19, 18—

I HAVE lived with a bandage about my eyes for two days. To be sure it proves nothing. As to the mechanics of music:—they are as possible to a blind man as to one who sees;—as possible even to a newly made blind man. As for the *soul* of art:—it would be impossible that a man who has known the darkness of blindness for but two days or for two years, should speak with authority.

There may be a development that comes with perpetual blindness; but I do not agree with my father. I believe that that man was a great musician, in spite of his blindness.

Had he possessed sight he would have held the spheres in his fingers; if without

## *The Diary of*

sight, he made the earth his own. There is a harmony of the senses which I believe must exist, to make the perfectest result. The destruction of one sense may develop another beyond that which is normal, but I think the results are certain to be morbid; and that art which cannot be understood of all who are rightly endowed with sensitiveness, is not good. A part of Beethoven's greatness was his power to avoid expressing in morbid ways the distraction of feeling that must have been his after deafness fell upon him,—and in his ability to keep his meaning clear. I think that a healthy and beautiful soul must have stood between his affliction and his great art.

July.

**M**Y father seems to experience some surprise and satisfaction in me that he has not felt before. He has said: "I never believed that you could become in-



# *Ca Musician*

tellectual, X——.” This is his mistake. He believes that my reasonings belong to some grand mental process. I am not a fool, yet that I arrive promptly at conclusions has little to do with intellectuality. I find my thought, as I do my interval in the dark,—it reaches out after me; I do not search for it. An intellectual person must *feel* the process of his mind. I *behold* the process of mine, and experience only my emotion.

I shall never be intellectual. I shall be a good artist, and happy; or I shall be despairing, and full of wickedness and destruction.

I am glad that my father is pleased! My father! My father!

July.

I CANNOT help thinking if some one should say: “YOU—MAY—NOT—GO—TO—PRAGUE!”—I should fall dead.



# *The Diary of*

July.

I HEAR a symphony in the squeal of the swine. In every pound of fat upon them, I behold Paradise.

July.

I WOULD I could make some one understand the happiness I feel. I cannot speak of it to my brothers.

July.

IF women but bore a different aspect!

August 4, 18—

I GO to the mill every other day for my father. I can no longer go in peace. Every day, every day the square girl waddles out upon the road a quarter of a mile from where she belongs, and takes the sack from me, and trudges along beside me like a duck.

I resisted it at first, but she near threw me down, and unless I hurt her I must

## Ca Musician

let her carry the sack. I fancy women must be hit if one would control them. That is why my father cannot control my good mother,—because he could not hit any one. He laughs and laughs,—which makes her much more angry,—but then he laughs the more.

I shall not laugh at this girl at the mill. I shall strike her when I am no longer able to bear her interference.

All women are ugly, but she is the very ugliest I have ever seen. Yesterday I went up to the *statkár's* house, and looked about. When I have learned to play well enough to teach others, I shall have more than six hundred florins a month, perhaps. In that case, I can make my father a *statkár* like the one who belongs to our village. That is the first thing that I shall do.

The mill-girl makes faces, and wags her head, and goes like a duck and says: “You are such a nice little fellow, X——: not

# *The Diary of*

like those with light hair." I don't know what business it is of hers.

I told my father, but he laughed. My father never does other than laugh,—unless he weeps. I shall beat her some day.

August 10, 18—

**I** SHALL not go to the mill again. I have told my father so, and he says that my sister shall carry the sack. Now let the mill-girl tell my sister about her hair and her straight legs! They are two, just alike.

August 12, 18—

**M**Y father has given me seventy-two beautiful silver buttons that he wore upon his coat, when he was a young man, and lived far from here,—elsewhere in Bohemia. I am to take them to Prague with me. It is all my father has to give me. He thought it very little; I think it a very great gift.

My father says I am to keep them by

## *Ca Musician*

me. His father gave them to him when he married my mother. I cannot help wondering if my mother looked as these square women look to me. Once I asked my father, and he thought a moment and then laughed his big laugh. He said: "I do not know how thy mother looked to other people; she looked to me as thy mother should look,—and so she is thy mother." He meant by that, that mother looked to please him. She does not look to me at all as other women do. She says she is like all those who live about us. Maybe that is so, but she does not seem thus to me;—but oh, my sister has matched them!

August 15, 18—

**M**Y father has been to Prague with cabbages; he has brought me a wonderful new piece of music. I play it upon my fiddle all of the time. I can read it. It is a piece by Paganini, and says upon the

# The Diary of

cover "Concerto". It is like plowing to read it, but I can plow—and I can read it. Some day I shall play it. I take much pleasure in my fourth finger. To play this piece, I shall need ten new fingers—ten more than I have now. From this on, I shall play nothing else until I can play it very slowly and precisely, from end to end, all in one movement;—there are several movements.

I play and sweat and breathe and play, and my father cries: "Great God, little X——, you will burst and die! Have done!"—It is wonderful.

August 16, 18—

MY brothers and sisters have told me over and over again, the things I am to get for them, when I have learned to teach people how to play. I have told them as many times, that they will get nothing. My father is to be a *statkář*, and my mother is to have a new dress

## *Ca Musician*

each year;—hence, I shall have nothing with which to get my brothers and sisters anything. Let them grow cabbages, or tend the swine as I am doing, and get for themselves.

September 7, 18—.

**S**IX months ago, what mental suffering I experienced! I am a different person. There is no longer any uncertainty that I go to Prague: the market is the best in several years. My father tells me that he has never seen swine that could produce a greater number of pounds to the creature, than these. It is as if the world were conspiring to send me to Prague; I feel so kindly toward all things. My father tells me that my work alone has profited him so much that, though only a young boy, I have fairly made my way to Prague. I think this an overstatement, yet I have worked the whole of the long summer days.

# *The Diary of*

Should I become a great musician, and find that I have not what my father calls the creative power, what a poor creature I should be! I shall try composition if there comes to me a theme—something silvery and fragile, with destruction menacing. It is useless just now for me to think of this matter. I do not know, as yet, the possibilities of my instrument; but as I work apart from my father, I feel tremendous possibilities stirring within myself.

One young pig I am fascinated by—a pig that will not come near the trough while I stand by it. A pail of milk would tempt all the others to their death; but the perverse pig—ah, it is the pig to love! All of the others remind me of the mill-girl.





# *The Musician*

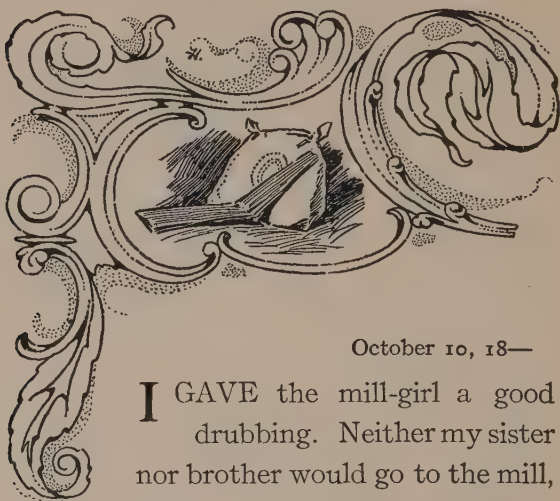
October 6, 18—

**T**HE swine are selling live weight. I experience no excitement. I have contemplated this time for months, and it seems to me that the future can hold no greater happiness for me, than this that I feel in tranquil anticipation.

39



# The Diary of



October 10, 18—

**I** GAVE the mill-girl a good drubbing. Neither my sister nor brother would go to the mill, and I took the sack. I went to wash my feet in the stream, and the mill-girl came and sat beside me. I did not look at her, but poked holes with my stick and flung the stones within reach, and sang, and looked into the trees that have grown so bare.

She giggled, and shoved her bare foot against mine. It made me have little trickles all down my back, and I kicked her,—then she laughed the more. I told

## *Ca Musician*

her if she did thus again, and if she did not go away, I would punch her with my fist; and I shook it at her. She ran off; but after awhile, when I was going back for my sack, she slipped behind me on the bank, and gave me a great kiss with a big sound. I ran and caught her, and gave her a drubbing with a shingle which I got from a pile beside the shed; it broke, and I finished with a little plank. All of the time she shrieked, I said: "Will you do it again? Will you do it again?" And she screamed "Yes, yes, yes!" I had to stop: the little plank broke.

She cannot do it again, because I will not go to the mill, nor will I leave my father's farm until I have gone to Prague. I fear it did no good to beat her: because she is so fat. I asked my father if fat people could be much hurt; he thought probably not. I did not tell him why I wished to know.

If I live away from here a thousand

# *The Diary of*

years, and I come back and find her thin,  
I'll whack her again.

October 24, 18—

**T**HE time is at hand when I leave  
home for Prague.

Even now, it seems a dream to me. I shall have to play for the music-master before it will be known what to do with me. I am greatly troubled about these strings; they are worthless. I want a good bow. I am to have a suit of clothes made by the man in the village. I suppose they will be better than those mother has always made for me. However, these that I wear have pleased me very well. If I can please the masters in Prague—that is more to the point! I think fine clothing will follow success. Just now I would rather have a good instrument; but that is not to be thought of.



# *As a Musician*

November 3, 18—

**I** GO to Prague to-morrow. As I sit here and write this, the fact does not seem possible. My belongings are packed; I am to wear my new clothing made by the man in the village; I am to go alone. My father has written to Prague, and I shall be told what to do when I get there.

In a few hours, I shall no longer be under my father's roof—but I shall be in Prague.

When I return here to this room, all will be changed: I shall be as another person. The room will seem changed, if dear to me. I feel certain that this is true. I shall have been to Prague. I shall know things. I shall be a musician.

My father will be the same to me; he will always influence my thoughts and emotions. It is not love alone that affects me; I am certain that my father is an able man, and that I shall feel this

# *The Diary of*

to be true even after I have seen the people of Prague.

I believe that I shall never feed the swine again, unless to find if the occupation will recall the emotions I have known.

The future will be glorious for me, although I cannot think how that will be. I am sad to think of it: it is farewell to all that I have known.

If I should hear the voice beside me say: "YOU — MAY — NOT — GO — TO — PRAGUE!"

Farewell, creatures that I have fed; farewell, old house;—the gardens where I have worked beside my father in the summer days. Farewell, all the little things of my childhood; I shall be a thousand years older when I return, though I should return a week hence. Farewell, all—even mother! When next we meet I shall feel a million years older than mother, and love her, maybe, as many heart-beats dearer. Farewell, not my father;—be-

# *A Musician*

cause all of my life my father will go with me, by my side; and so will the hours with him in this room.—All the nights we have sat together while my father has read aloud! I shall hear his voice above the music I shall make. Farewell, then, all but my father! He and I will be always together. I pray to God to-night, that I may be as good to my children as my father has been to me.

November 4, 18—

**I** AM in Prague.

I have been here eight hours and twenty-two minutes. I have seen the world. My blood is on fire. Like all other anticipations of happiness that I have known, the realization has brought to me entire felicity. My father has ever warned me that fulfillment means disappointment. It is otherwise with me. I imagine great happiness, and when the conditions of that

# *The Diary of*

happiness arrive, my satisfaction is more intense than I have believed possible.

From the moment when I became seated in the train that was to carry me to Prague, a new soul seemed to enter into my body. I rode alone. I sat surrounded by that luxury I had so often longed for as I stood on the platform of the station at M——, without the doors of the first-class carriages, and imagined the feel of the beautiful red plush of the seats. I had thought to ride in the carriages with the wooden seats, but my father arranged differently; he said: "That you may not feel too strange when you meet with finer conditions",—and then we bade good-by. I wept.

I am only a little way from home, but I feel as if the whole world lay between.

It is well to sit upon the red seats with some care. There is an ecstasy of uncertainty about the things with which they are stuffed—wires. A man whom my



# *Ca Musician*

father knows met me at the station, and conducted me to this place where I am to lodge. I have eighteen florins a month on which to live, the silver buttons which my father gave me, and my new clothing.

I can easily save enough with which to buy new strings.

There is a fine great clay stove in the corner; it is much taller than our room at home is high. It warms less than does a strong soul or a joyous thought; yet it is a very pleasant warmth, if strange to me. I feel as if I might never again know that rush of the blood through the veins, and that tingle of the flesh, which came to me on clear cold mornings,—when I rose along with my father, before day, to care for the farm-creatures. All is changed. I seem to have lost my body, and only to possess a soul. I write upon air with a dream-pen. I have not yet touched my violin; it is not unpacked. I

## *The Diary of*

feel that I shall know a new sound when next I play.

When I had my dinner, the water was in a fine glass bottle.

The beautiful gold signs above the places where one may buy, are beyond all description. When I feel able, I shall write again to my father. It seems strange that he has never told me of these things, when relating what he has seen. He has been to Prague many times, and even to Paris. He has never mentioned the shop-signs. It is possible that they are quite new, within a few weeks: because my father was in Prague but two months ago.

I found myself looking for the beautiful creatures my father has told me of,—the women in great cities. I have seen many women in the streets, but they are none of them the women of whom my father has told me. They are even more ugly than those in M——, if that were possible;

## *Ca Musician*

because their clothes are more pretentious, and often compel attention to them when otherwise they might have passed unheeded.

How my father can believe that anything so square as a woman, back and front—unless indeed she is looked upon from the side—is beautiful, I do not understand. To regard a woman at one side, seems to present to me innumerable and enormous great cushions, placed by God upon her in odd and unseemly places.

I shall write of this, and of the red seats in the carriages, and of the signs, and of the glass bottle that holds the water, after I have seen the music-master to-morrow.

I am to go alone, and shall inquire my way as I go. I am so confused by the glorious sounds that tell of life, and seem about to reveal to me all its mysteries, that I cannot write of my emotions to-night. I am in this room quite alone. I alone am to occupy the bed. They used

# The Diary of

to tell me that at the house of the *statkár* on the hill, the *statkár* and his family slept in beds quite by themselves; but till now I could not believe it. The sheets will be cool, and I may move my pillow according to my will; thus, one of my beautiful dreams of life will come true. Oh, never to have settled one's pillow for oneself, with one's hand under it, with its corners tucked close to one's neck! When I have thought of all these things, and that I should never go to Prague, it has seemed as if I could no longer bear my life.

I go to the master at ten o'clock in the morning, and I must write no more; but to-morrow night I shall have all to tell here.

November 5, 18—

**A** GAIN it is night; the dream continues.

Who can say that realization is less than anticipation? Such happiness as I now experience is of another world. I have

# *The Musician*

seen the master, and have played for him. I was frightened, but cheerful,—believing that a truly good master would know of my handicap of fear. I played indifferently, but I am to be taught. I am to receive individual instruction, and class. I do not know all that “class instruction” implies, but it does not matter. The master says I might learn to play if I had three pulse-beats to the minute, less. He is kind, but not strong like my father. He himself does not play exceedingly well; however, I am not here to listen to him play, but myself to be taught. To-morrow I am to go to the conservatory, and will receive my first instruction: class in the morning, private instruction in the afternoon.

I am glad that I practiced my fourth finger in my pocket all the year, because he said: “I see you have almost independence of finger; good!” After I saw the master, I walked in the town.

# The Diary of



The bridge! The bridge! I stood upon it, and passed my fingers over the cross let in to the parapet, again and again; and I thought of the millions of hands that have touched it. I did not touch it with religious reverence;—not with that inspira-

## *Ca Musician*

tion known to others. Mine was a reverence for countless humanity, and pity for its lack of pillows. Only one who passed and touched the brass cross, seemed conscious of life's joys, together with human limitations; she was a young woman. She was not square. She was pale and thin, and her clothes would have not minded me to look at her. I longed to throw my arms about her and say: "Do not grieve; I will comfort you." After leaning over the parapet she passed on.

Few of those who passed, knew their fingers had touched the metal. Most of them had done that thing for so many years, that it had ceased to have a meaning for them.

Desolation is less fearful than this ignorance that grief and joy exist.

Even in Prague they are mostly human cattle. Feed them, bed them, and I fancy it is enough. At this moment I am

## *The Diary of*

oppressed. Oh, men and women!—Especially women.

There is more of this city than I have seen. I sat beneath a high bronze image for so long, that I forgot the time till I heard a great clock strike fourteen; I looked up to find it falling dark.

At intervals all day, I have remembered that here, in this splendid warm room, I have a bed and pillow, cool and big, where the hot heavy flesh of my sister, and the jumpings and groanings of my brother, will not suffocate and madden me. Oh those horrid nights that I have tried to rest, straight and shrinking against the wall, lest I arouse them! The winter nights when I have rushed out into the frozen air: to wave my arms, and screech under my breath with a kind of madness of irritation that possessed me, while trying to lie quiet like an image! Oh heaven and all its angels, nevermore put me in a bed with any other human



# *Ca Musician*

creature! I can lie beside the cow and even beside the pig if I must, but not with any sweating, heavy, lumpish human beings. I cannot! I cannot!

I have written to my dear father, and have not forgotten to send my love to mother, and my regards to my brothers and to my sister.

To-morrow I begin to learn. I shall study day and night; I shall please my father, and one day give him back the pig-money.

My dear father.

A dreadful thought has come to me in the excessive enjoyment of my own happiness. It is that perhaps my father, who never had a bed or a pillow for himself in all his life, may have longed for this happiness as I have; and he may have endured his cross in silence, all of these years. Always mother and a baby between him and comfort.

I shall send him a bed and a pillow. This is my resolve.

# *The Diary of*

November 6, 18—

I KNOW the length, breadth and depth of a place of learning. It is certainly long, none too broad, and not at all deep; but it has dimensions enough for me.

It is, after all, to work methodically,—this learning. There can be but about so much to impart, but there is no limit to achievement: it is according to one's capacity for concentration. I have a great deal. I used four of my buttons to-day, and have some good strings in their stead. I have but one wish more in this world at present; that is, a bed and a pillow for my father.

I am observing all things, that I may know of all that is desirable in this world; and then I shall wish for all, and finally I will make the promises of life my own.

I saw many people in the class to-day. I do not know to-night what they are like. Like me, I think,—except that most of

# *Ca Musician*

them know more; however they will not accomplish so much.

I go to bed. I am not yet used to my bed's existence. One day I shall regard its possession with tranquillity; as yet it is a passion.

November 8, 18—

**I** HAVE seen the girl on the Carl's Bridge. She, too, is being taught at the Conservatory; I saw her as I passed out. I ran fast to her, and grasped her hands and kissed them. She smiled, and turned and looked after me as I ran away. I ran, for fear I should ask her why she is not happy.

When she tells me, it will be time that I should know.

Her hair is brown and wavy; there is no color in her face; her eyes are tired;—not strong, I think. She must look closely, if she would see quite well. Her wrists are very little, and a small bone is there

## *The Diary of*

with a blue vein inside her wrist. I did not know before that there was a little bone in the wrists of female creatures. That girl at the mill has just one solid club of flesh.

To-morrow, I shall find where the gentle girl is lodged; and then I shall live for her every moment of my life,—even when I practice. I think she must play divinely: her fingers are so long, and like the sensitive little whiskers on butterflies. When I kissed her hands her fingers seemed to wind about mine, and I could not bear to let them go. When I know her, I will find out if she has a pillow all her own; if not, I will send her one. I will send her one before my father. After all, my father has endured without for a very long time, while she has not yet become used to despair.

My big, high, hot stove is like a splendid fierce dragon; I have practiced for hours; I have had good food, and I have walked;

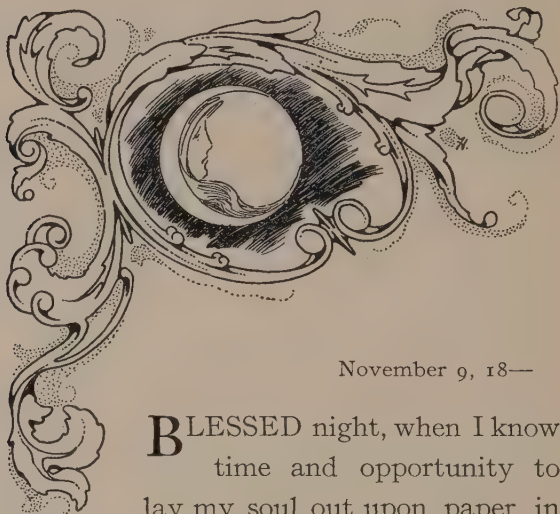
# *The Musician*

I have the white girl to think of, and  
now I go to my pillow.

Good-night, my father.



# The Diary of



November 9, 18—

**B**LESSED night, when I know time and opportunity to lay my soul out upon paper, in the tranquillity of this splendid room!

I have seen the girl again, and the little blue threads of veins show above her knuckles, just at one side. She has a soft little curl that rests upon her ear-lobe. Its habit is to rest there, because her hand presses upon it as she leans her head upon her hand. I heard her play. She plays upon the violin like me;—not like me. She plays very delicately, and with facil-

## *Ca Musician*

ity, but her hands quiver too much. I watch and long to hold them, and to do her work for her. I would like her to be all the artist, while I might do all the work that is necessary to arrival.

I looked at her alone, and she often looked at me. When she coughed it seemed that my breast was on fire with the hurt of it.

I went to her and touched her on the shoulder; she was not angry.

I touched her very lightly, remembering the heavy hand of my sister. Once, my sister clapped me on my back. I turned the water-bucket on her. I might have killed her: if the pail had been a lake, I had drowned her.

The Twilight girl—her name is Ludmila—said: “You have come here to be a musician?” and I could only nod.

“It is very difficult”, she said.

I was able then to speak. I told her that I did not think it difficult; that if it

## *The Diary of*

seemed difficult to her, maybe I could help her. We sat apart, trying each other's violins,—or I did,—she only looked on; appearing to be very tired and listless. She told me of the men and women about us, who were learning to play.

One young man who is much older than I, is very fine. His name is Josef Jaroslav; but the women are—I think I cannot truthfully say: I did not observe them. One of them played something that I used to play at home; and she lost her place, and could do nothing at all till she had begun again, and had passed over the measure safely. She has talents, I am sure. She could make good sausages. I would compliment her—and eat them; but I will not compliment her—and listen.

I asked the Twilight girl, Ludmila, what she would do when she forgot. She said:

“I do not know;—do something else, I fancy, till I recovered myself.”

That is ability. I hope in time to play



## *Ca Musician*

as well as Jaroslav plays. I walked upon the Carl's Bridge with the Twilight girl, holding fast her hand all the way, and carrying our violins. We hardly spoke. We touched the cross together.

"Ah", she said with a lovely smile, "you, too, love God."

I never think of God; but it pleased me to do anything that encourages thoughts of love, even if it be to touch a brass cross.

"You must love God", she said. I promised her that I would. It will please her, hence I shall love God as long as she wishes me to. I asked her about her pillow. She looked at me for some seconds, and then asked of me what I said. I asked her again if she had a pillow all her own. After looking at me again for some time, while I regarded her beautiful eyes of blue with some pleasure, she said:

"Yes, I have a pillow. There are two pillows on our bed."

I felt less solicitude; but if there be

## *The Diary of*

two pillows, she must share her bed with a girl. My God! It were better for her to sleep with my brother, who humps himself about the bed, than with a girl who lies so sodden and lumpish. I made no answer. It would be inutile to offer sympathy, but it would be helpful to give her a bed. I must do something: I can no longer enjoy my own splendid comfort, for thinking of her miserable nights.

It is, perhaps, a secret of her sadness. I shall buy the bed to-morrow, and eat one meal less. Thus I shall have paid for it at the end of the month. My father will have to wait. I shall not sleep for thinking of her discomfort this night, and for thinking of her happiness on the morrow;— I will send the bed while she is at the Conservatory. I played very well to-day, but lost my place, and in trying to “do something else”, as the Twilight girl said, I forgot to find it again, till the master said: “Well, well! Shade of Paganini!

## *Ca Musician*

Will you never run down!" I was glad to stop, because I was tired, and the sweat was streaming down my face. Everybody laughed except Ludmila. She clasped my hand when I went to sit beside her. The fine musician Josef said: "Wake up, gipsy."

I thought of how the Twilight girl would find her bed at home. It was that thought which I was playing about. I shall hear nothing of her happiness until to-morrow. I went to her door with her. I go before her, and remove the little stones and bits of paper, or whatever there may be in her path. It is nothing, but it is all that I can do. I am as hungry as a fox: this is my first night without my supper; but I shall become used to it, and the Twilight will be sleeping well. She will never know who sent it, but her happiness will be so great that she will tell me of it, and then I shall be delirious with joy.

My dear father!—But it seemed necessary that her bed should come first.

# *The Diary of*

November 10, 18—

I AM full to the top with joy.

The Twilight found the bed on her return home. She came to me when I entered the Conservatory. She said: "Thank you for the bed", and smiled at me. I felt myself aglow from head to foot. She knew it was I who sent it. I asked her if she was happy, and she said it was certainly well to have a bed, but her happiness was for my thought of her.

I am very happy. I am never disappointed.

At the Conservatory they do not seem to care for her work. I do not know how that may be; but I worship her: she is so fragile and so still. If I may but touch her hand, and look upon her, I am satisfied. I cannot think how I am to get the bed for my father. I dare not eat less.



# *Ca Musician*

December.

**I** KNOW nothing of life.

It is more wonderful than I had dreamed. I have seen what luxury is for the first time. The Twilight lives in Vinohrady, where all is as a new world;—bright streets, broad and fine, and in the wall of the room where my Twilight lives, —I never entered before to-day,—there is a hole through which one need but speak, to be heard in the rooms below. In a place near to her lodging, there is an instrument through which one may speak, and be heard afar off—miles. I went home, and got a button with which to purchase a conversation. Some man spoke to me from a long way off; it was like enchantment. I said: “I love my father.”

He said: “Very good.”

I said: “I love my Twilight.”

He said: “Very good.”

I said: “I am very happy.”

# *The Diary of*

He said: "Very good, very good, very good."

It gives me pleasure, only to remember that such things be, and that I have seen them.

I saw the Twilight's room. It is much finer than mine, yet she tells me that it is not fine at all. There is certainly much that I had not even dreamed of. She does not laugh, but she listens seriously, and often smiles. Her smile is gentle,—and then she touches my hand. We play together. She plays with such painstaking precision and so delicately, it pleases me; but I feel the need to stamp and cry: "Forte!"; and sometimes when I have raged long enough, she glances up from her instrument, and even knows some of my health and vigor. I play for her, and when I have finished she has bright spots on her cheeks; I have never seen them at any other time. She must then lie upon her bed and rest, but she smiles at me

## *Ca Musician*

always. She says that I am strength to her, but that is not true. I make her very ill; while I never go from her house without a new accession of health and vitality.

Sometimes I stay beside her for a very long time, and hold her hand while she falls asleep. This pleases her, because even in her sleep a smile of kindness is on her face. She is so thin, and her skin is so clear, I can seem to see into it inches deep.

I have sent my father his bed. I have sold ten buttons, and the bed is a good one. I have never been so happy as to-night;—not even on the day when I came to Prague. To-day I know that Prague exists, more wonderful than I had thought it to be; and what is more, I am a part of it. I may sit beside the Twilight; I may stand under the dark arch of the Carl's Bridge at night, when all is still; I may stand on the Ringplatz, and watch the figures of the clock come out;

# *The Diary of*

I may work hour after hour among others who love their music as I love mine; I have pleased the Twilight; I have sent a bed to my beloved father; I may sit and sum up my joys, knowing them all to be very real and to be repeated and to be enjoyed, again and again. I am very happy.

December 15, 18—

**I** DID not go to the Conservatory to-day, nor have I touched my violin.

I went early to the Twilight's to walk in the clear morning with her, and I found her weeping. When I saw her tears it seemed that I must die; such wretchedness have I never known. I fell upon my knees beside her, and threw my arms about her; she ceased to cry, and held me tightly. I know what she felt;—as I do when near to my father. I am strong, and full of quick blood; while she is fragile, and needs to be saved.



## *Ca Musician*

She clung to me, and the bright spots in her cheeks glowed, and her hands were dry and hot. I felt that she was very ill. I led her to her bed, and made her rest upon it. I said: "I wish my father were here, he would comfort you and make you feel strong." She pushed me from her, and after looking in my face she smiled, shook her head, and turned her face away.

I did not leave her, but sat beside her all the day. She was pleased, but she no longer looked as she did when my arms were about her, and her voice was quite indifferent. I knew it to be because she was so weak. I offered to play for her, but she would not have it; she said no: it made her feverish. All the day, she frequently broke into sobs; she could only tell me she was depressed, and I did not know whether to stay or to go. I felt my own vitality increasing, momentarily; while she became visibly exhausted. I

## *The Diary of*

begged her to tell me the cause of her sadness. At last she said: "Because you are so young." I did not know her meaning. My age and hers are the same;—I am even eight weeks older. I reminded her of this, and she said: "Oh be quiet, be quiet." She is a grateful angelic girl.

I would give my soul to make her well. I did not know before that she was so ill. She tells me she has grown very much worse since the day we met. I would write my father about her, and ask what I am to do, but she will not let me.

I think it must be right even to deceive or to lie to my father, if she desires me to;—because I feel so comfortable when I have done what she demands.

We are to have a trial for choice of players at a concert to be given in January. The trial will take place on the 29th of this month. I had thought to play a Mozart Minuet, till I found that the Twilight meant to play it. It is her style,

## *Ca Musician*

and it is not difficult. I have given it up to her. Afterward I chose the Paganini-Wilhelmji Concerto. When I told the master, he laughed. He thinks I have made a too ambitious choice. I know what I have chosen. I learn that it is the choice of Josef Jaroslav, who plays so superbly. I think the master told me this to frighten me. Bah!—We shall see!

The Twilight is better, and is practicing; but when I thought to do my work near her,—because a listener gives to me inspiration,—she could not endure it. I practiced at her room one day, and she trembled and grew ill, and told me she could not bear it. At such times she grasps my hands with such strength that I am amazed. At such moments she is unlike herself. I am afraid, and would withdraw my hands, but I fear to give her pain.

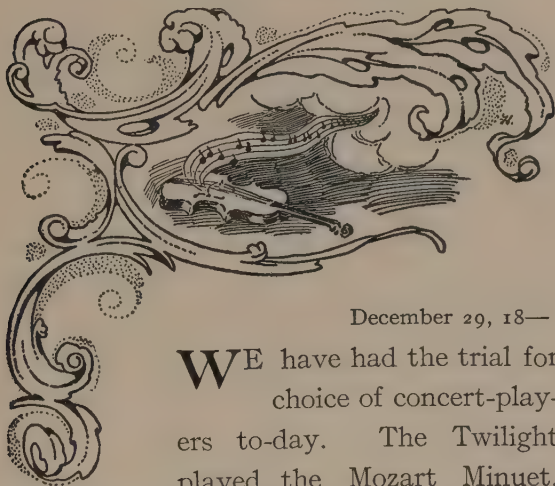
Perhaps she knows that I am startled, because she laughs and says: “ Well, well;

## *The Diary of*

go if you will." She says: "To-morrow we will play together",—but we never do. She sleeps alone now, in the little bed; she is too fragile to feel the joy that I feel at all times for any cause, but in her way she is happy. I have little time to write here since this excessive practice has begun. If I write at length I must neglect my work or my visit to the Twilight. I never miss my supper any more; I soon became used to going without.



# *Ca Musician*



December 29, 18—

**WE** have had the trial for choice of concert-players to-day. The Twilight played the Mozart Minuet, and Josef and I played the Concerto. He played first.

As the day grew near, I had felt certain that it was folly for me to attempt it. Josef played superbly. He seemed to have a perfect mastery and coördination of his muscles, his nerves, and his emotion.

He plays with as much freedom as precision, I think. He never departs from a conservative interpretation of anything. We applauded till the room vibrated with

## *The Diary of*

our enthusiasm. The master beckoned me, as soon as the noise subsided. When I went up to play, I was still applauding. While I was about to draw my bow, still there were fitful bursts of applause for Josef. The tears were streaming down my face, because of his excellent performance. The master had to pound with his stick upon the back of his chair, before I remembered what was expected of me. I played the piece with much enjoyment to myself, after the first distressing moment. I do not know how I played, but doubtless not very impressively, because there was no applause for as much as a minute; and if I had not so enjoyed my own performance, I am certain I would have felt some anxiety. Later, after I had started to leave the platform, I received some desultory applause. I did not dream of being permitted to play it at the concert, after Josef's excellent performance. But after all was over, and

## *Our Musician*

most of the others had gone, the master said: "Practice that—and your chromatic scale—till the 27th of January."

I asked him if he wished me to play it. He answered: "Practice."

I told him I did not think it showed well beside the performance of Josef. He told me that Josef had come to him before leaving, and had refused to play it.

This confused me; but I asked no questions, because I dared not; besides, I expected to know all that it meant from the Twilight.

It was decided that she was to play the Minuet, and she had waited for us to walk together. She is somewhat stronger, and we walked out into the country. She told me that Josef had played the Concerto much better than I; but she said it would be absurd for him to play it upon the same occasion, and thereby challenge comparison. She either could not or would not tell me why. When I pressed

## *The Diary of*

her, she said: "I do not know why. Simply,—it would be absurd. Everybody felt it; even the master himself. He told you, didn't he? Well, that is why nobody applauded. I tried to, but could not for a full minute. I do not know why. Your scale is bad, and you would better do something about it." Thus, my practice is laid out for me.

I shall have very little time to write here, for four weeks to come. I need certain music, and will sell more buttons.

January 6, 18—

**I** AM practicing day and night.

So far as knowledge and musical judgment may go, I have the piece at my command; but there is that within myself which seems to make entirely even execution well-nigh impossible. The Twilight is not so well. She has worked too hard, and coughs badly. If she should



## *Ca Musician*

not be able to play!—It is a distressing thought to me.

I feel that her abilities are not appreciated at the Conservatory, although no one has suggested to me that this is so. I am sure that she would play well. Her performance has gained something since I first heard her play. Often she responds to my love of musical enthusiasm, and bursts through the monotony of her eternal—if exquisite—delicacy of execution. I feel that she is very ill.

January 11, 18—

**I** HAVE had a beautiful letter from my father.

The master has written to him; I do not know what, but my father's satisfaction is evident. He tells me that I am to have new clothing made for the concert.

I will follow his instruction; these clothes that I have look very well, I fancy, except that I cut a piece of fur from the

# *The Diary of*

jacket to pay for a talk through the telephone.

However, I will do as my father wishes.

I cannot find time to practice enough. The Twilight is very ill,—too ill to play,—and she has had to abandon the concert. I am with her every day, and often far into the night; because she coughs so badly, she has had to take a room by herself. While the girl with whom she has lived is kind, I think the Twilight finds little comfort in the presence of any one but me. She told me so. When I am away from her, my efforts are abortive, because my soul is oppressed. I then feel that I must fly to save her.

Josef is a good fellow. He knows, as do the others, that I am caring for the Twilight; because they constantly ask news of her from me, and Josef has warned me not to neglect my work for the concert.

He has chosen another piece.



# *Ca Musician*

January 12, 18—

I RETURNED home from the Twilight's to-night at eight o'clock, and found Josef in my room awaiting me. I had sat beside Ludmila since morning. Her hands were like fire, and her breathing more and more difficult. Her face is more and more sweet and beautiful to me. All I wish is to save her life. A panic of protective emotion frequently overcomes me. I had sat outside her door all the night before; going to her when I could not bear that she should struggle for breath alone. I had quite forgotten that there was to be a concert, till I found Josef within. He gave me my violin at once, and took his from its case, and announced that he had come to play the Concerto. I told him that I was so exhausted with sleeplessness, watching and emotion, that I could not. He was persistent, and we played together. Before I knew, I had forgotten fatigue and sadness, and the strings were drawing

## *The Diary of*

my soul from my body. Josef frequently stopped me, demanding a continual repetition of faulty passages, until I felt that strange facility, which often is a handicap, submitting to method.

The practice of the night, did more for me than all the work I had put upon the piece for three weeks.

Josef is generous beyond conception. I asked him about his own work, and he laughed, and assured me that he would perform it with absolute precision, good judgment and enough musicianly genius to give him applause. When I listen to him, I feel a furor of enthusiasm. I fear he does not sufficiently appreciate his own genius. I cannot be grateful enough to him for the good he has done me. I have received a knowledge that could not have become mine in any other way than the way he adopted.

Alas! The moment I had laid aside my violin, my thoughts flew to Ludmila. I

## *Our Musician*

shall hasten to her at daylight. My father is to come to the concert.

January 22, 18—

I HAVE hardly touched my violin since the night Josef came to my room. I am panic-stricken when I think of the concert. I am threatened with expulsion from the Conservatory classes, and with the discontinuation of my lessons altogether, if I do not put in an appearance. I have been sent for, and the master himself came to this room; he treated me with such contempt and harshness as would have broken my heart, two months ago. But I only listened as in a dream: I am so exhausted with sorrow that nothing he can do can affect me.

He says that he has written to my father, and that I shall attend to my work. I went one day to the Conservatory, and tried to play. I stood like a fool while every one looked at me; and some laughed,

## *The Diary of*

and some called out to me, "Wake up, gipsy", as Josef so often does; but I could do nothing.

My eyes were full of tears, and when they began to fall, the master roared at me, and ordered me from the house. I fear I shall not be able to play.

I must submit to my Fate: I must remain beside Ludmila. When I enter the room, she breathes freer for a moment. She talks of nothing but the concert. I say "Yes, yes"—but I do not hear. I only see her hollow cheeks, her tiny wrists, her dark hair clinging in little tendrils to her forehead. The spots burn like fire in her cheeks, and her nostrils quiver with every breath.

January 26, 18—

**G**REAT Heaven! On my return to my room for one moment last night, I found my father. I fell against the wall, and stared without speaking. I felt such

## *Ca Musician*

a rush of love and peace to my heart, that presently I began to weep; and I threw myself into his arms. We wept together,—my father kissing my face and hair, and holding me close in his embrace. After I realized his presence, I became frightened. He said: “How about thy music, little X——?” I had forgotten it since eight days. They had ceased to send for me, and to assail me with reproaches. I could answer nothing.

“You are not going to fail me?” my father asked. My soul answered him. No, I will not fail my father. I do not know what I am to do. I can recall nothing of the Concerto: I tried to play it for him, but broke down in tears. However, I shall play to-morrow night. I will not go to the Conservatory at this late hour: indeed I dare not.

My father will not leave me until the dreadful moment has arrived, otherwise I could not live. I will go to Ludmila,

# *The Diary of*

and he will go with me when it is day, and will remain with her while I must be absent. It should make her well again.

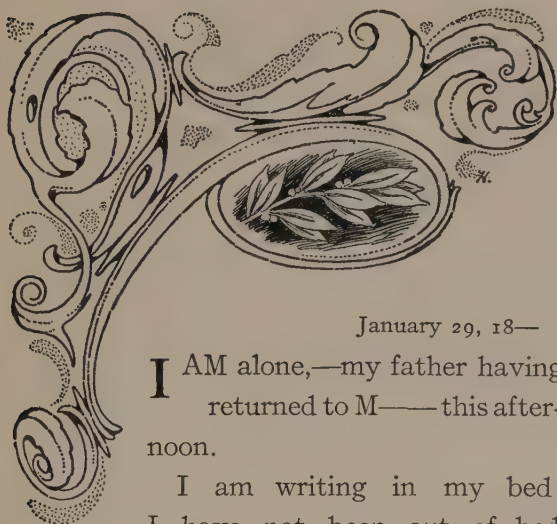
Josef came before bedtime, and saw my father, and said I was a fool. But my father said: "My little X—— cannot help it. Let us not grieve him. He is in trouble." Oh my beloved father! I would play for him, though it should kill me. I have received the new clothing my father wished me to have. When my father and I go to Ludmila's, I shall carry my clothing, and thus I need not leave her till I must go to the hall. We play in the koncertiní sň v "Rudolfinum".

I can put on my new clothing, which is like that the people in Prague wear, at her house.





# Ca Musician



January 29, 18—

I AM alone,—my father having returned to M—— this afternoon.

I am writing in my bed; I have not been out of bed since the morning after the concert. I am no longer ill, else my father had not left me. I lie here, only because there is no reason for me to arise to-night; but to-morrow I shall be about my business again.

I seem to have become rich in an hour. I am still trying to understand all that has happened to me. My father explained it to me, over and over; but I fancy I

# *The Diary of*

have been too fatigued to grasp the meaning of what they tell me.

On the afternoon of the 27th, my father went with me to Ludmila's house, taking my new clothing and my violin. I felt my promise to my father, but was unable to throw off the fearful depression that was upon me. During the afternoon Ludmila became excited, despite that tenderness which I was certain my father would give to her. He said no more of the concert, but Ludmila spoke of it again and again, urging me feverishly.

I listened, and answered her as best I could. At seven o'clock my father spoke to me, telling me of the hour. Ludmila experienced a fearful fit of coughing, and the blood gushed from her mouth. I was horrified. I did not know that I could experience such utter desolation. She lay with closed eyes, while the physician held his fingers to her wrist, and frequently gave her medicine.

# *Ca Musician*

Presently, when we thought her asleep, she opened her eyes and said to me: "Go and play."

It seemed as if the whole world was going mad. When I hesitated in bewilderment she became irritated, and the physician told me to go at once. I snatched my violin without its case, and rushed away, my father following.

It was then past nine o'clock. By the time we had reached the hall, the second part of the concert was begun. My place had been in the first part. Josef had already played. My father followed me in at the back. The master spoke roughly to me; what occurred is as a dream. I heard him stamp, and he cut me on the shoulder with his stick. I did not think to ask if I should play then or not at all; and the way to the platform being open, I went out upon it. I heard the master call to me to come back, but I only knew certainly, that I must play for my father.

# *The Diary of*

While I stood, I could hear the master cursing and calling for the accompanist, who presently hastened after me. I do not recall what happened after that,—except great waves of sound in my ears, and the crushing embrace of my father, who was in tears, and the cold clear night air; and how the heavens seemed to be falling upon me, and the earth coming up to me; and how I stumbled and stumbled as I walked; and how finally my father took me in his arms—as if I were a little boy again—and carried me within, and laid me on my bed.

I slept at once. I did not awaken until the night of yesterday; and there my father sat beside me. When I opened my eyes he leaped up, and shook his great head, and strode about the room singing “SOME — time — SOME — time — SOME — time—DA—da.”

It was minutes before I could command my thoughts, and perceive what had hap-

## Ca Musician

pened to me. My father remained with me until to-day. He has entered into a contract for me with some music man of business. I do not know precisely what it is, but I am to have plenty of money while I remain here in Prague, and I am to remain until September next. I am to continue my studies at the Conservatory, and under some changed conditions. In September I am to play in other cities, for the music man of business. I am not yet old enough to make a contract, hence my father has done so for me.

I have a large sum of money already. I begged my father to take it home with him; but he says it is all mine, and in the bank. He told me how I may get it to use. It is my father's money. He shall have a beautiful house like the *statkár*. Ludmila is better, and I have not seen her. My father went to her house while I slept yesterday. He assures me she is better, and brought me a letter of affection from

## The Diary of

her. I shall put on my new clothing which he brought back from the Twilight's, and go to see her at daybreak to-morrow. My father says that my jacket with the piece of fur gone in the middle, looked very queer at the concert.

I suppose it did; had I cut the piece from the back, it would have looked right in front; but I had cut it from where it was easiest to reach. However, I do not see that my clothes had anything to do with my music. I should have made no more money for my father in the new clothing, than I have with the fur off.

Josef came late this afternoon. He dragged me from my bed by the neck-band, and thumped me down again, and shouted, "Wake up, gipsy!" I asked him if I were rich; he said no, but that I am going to be. That will answer.

Father will be *statkář*.

# *As a Musician*

August 3, 18—

I AM living in the most remarkable atmosphere. I do not remember that I ever dreamed of fame, or of doing anything better than might another; yet I seem to have done something more than others have.

I receive the praise and affection of all those whom I daily speak with. The masters at the Conservatory are all my friends, although they are all hard and exacting. My companions—those learning to become musicians as I am learning—are kind and generous. Josef comes often to my room, and we play together; and if he shouts at me in the most fierce manner, yet he throws his arms about me the moment we put aside our violins.

He will leave Prague before I do; next month he goes to Berlin to take an engagement with an orchestra. When we play together I lose much of my emotional fever, and at such times I know myself

## *The Diary of*

to be playing with an intelligence that is not usually mine. I am sure I do not see why I should not acquire this quality of precision and technique in as great a measure as I have facility;—or perhaps agility is the better word.

My father now comes frequently to Prague. I do not go home because I rise and practice, and breakfast and practice, and go to the Conservatory and work; then return and practice, and eat and practice, and eat again and practice,—and sleep.

Yet with all this, I see the Twilight. She speaks continually of the future—of *my* future. I have gone to live near her, and my house is but a few moments' walk from her door. I may not be with her so much as I would if the physician had not limited my visits. I do not know why my presence should be a constant menace to her, since I feel for her the utmost concern and devotion; I recall



## *Ca Musician*

with horror the scene the night of the concert,—when the blood gushed from her mouth, and I saw her lying as one dead before us.

My father agrees to use my money when I am rich; but he will not permit me to use it for him now. Indeed, I sent him so many things that he came to Prague, and asked me to give him all. I took it from the bank. I believed it was for him to use; but he replaced it to his own credit, and will use none of it; so that now I can get him nothing; and when I make known my own desires, he laughs and stamps, and sings “SOME—time—DA—da.”

I can do nothing, and must abide by it. For me,—I have all that a person should desire.

There is one of those holes in my wall here in Vinohardy, through which I may speak with those below. I speak there a hundred times a day; indeed, whenever I pause to rest: it is such a mystery and

## *The Diary of*

delight. I hear them grumble below,—but then they laugh as well.

I have a kind of soap with the odor of Paradise.

I experience self-reproach when I write: at such times I might be with the Twilight. I see there is to be little opportunity to revert to old habits until I have left Prague.

I do not know where I am to play first.

August 8, 18—

**I**T is practically settled that I play first in Vienna.

My father will know from this music man of business, within the week.

August 12, 18—

**W**HEN I play of late, I know a new power, and have a new command of my instrument; nothing has served me so well as the kindness of Josef. I can never be grateful enough to him. I long for his success as if it were mine.

# *Ca Musician*

My Twilight moves about her room, and sometimes I sit with her for half an hour. I think of her always.

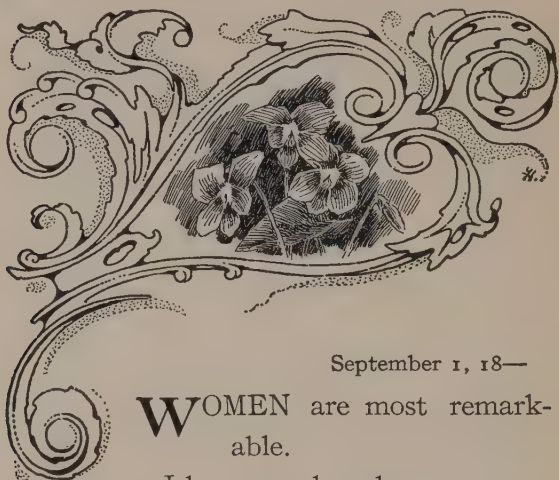
August 31, 18—

**I** HAVE not written here for three weeks: it is work, work from morning till night. The music man of business who has made the contract with my father, desires me to stand upon my feet as other people do.

I did not know that I stood differently. I am to learn to play, with my left foot at some strange angle—I do not know at what angle. Its present one appears to me to be good enough.



# The Diary of



September 1, 18—

**W**OMEN are most remarkable.

I have purchased more soap—half a hundred pieces. Each has a new and more splendid smell than the other.

September 3, 18—

**I** AM assailed on all sides at the Conservatory, about my personal appearance.

First it is my hair, then my left leg, then the length of my sleeves. I will love God for God's sake, as well as for Ludmila, if they will but give me peace.

# Ca Musician

I supposed the money was paid for my music; but now it is my hair, my sleeves, my legs.

September 6, 18—

**I** HAVE given up my leg.

I play with it as God made it or I play with it not at all.

I have devoted myself for six weeks to cultivating the position of my leg, that it may be such as to please this music man of business. I can no more play and think of my leg, than I could fiddle with one hand and eat *hrach a kroupy* with the other. My left leg was made to turn off at a distance from my right leg when I play the fiddle, and so it shall.

My leg stays as it was intended by God.

My hair shall remain in a way that I may know myself.

Once, I cut it off that I might not be called a Romany.

Once, I permitted it to grow in an excess

# The Diary of

of generosity for the mill-girl. Now I will have done with triviality.

I am to make my father rich and a *statkář* by my music;—so to Hell with my leg, my sleeves, and my hair.

September 7, 18—

**T**WO weeks from this night I shall play in Vienna.

This matter has been decided. I do not feel elated, nor do I feel much anxiety. I have worked day and night, and I play very well indeed; yet not so well as people believe. I shall never tell them that they are mistaken. I myself do not know wherein I fail, but I fail.

I feel, feel, feel of my harmony. Maybe I have the creative power. It is the Moonlight woman, not the Twilight woman, but all silvery! A Soul glancing down the moon-beams, with storm-clouds gathering in the midnight heavens.

I shall write that some day—when the

# *Ca Musician*

angle of my left leg is forgot. *Sakramente!*

The Twilight goes to Vienna to hear me play. She speaks of nothing else. She no longer speaks a great deal when I am there; but I sit beside her, and hold her hand fast. She is so fragile, so far away;—I shall play only for her. I play at my best when she is near.

September 10, 18—

**I** SHALL work on, on until the moment of my departure for Vienna.

My father will not go. He says he cannot. He is like a madman. I look at him, and behold his great transports of joy, and wonder that I do not feel as he feels. I know nothing but work—and impatience at the trivialities of the masters and the music man of business, who are all distraught because of my appearance. The music man complains I look like

# The Diary of

a peasant. *Sakrementský hlupák!* What would they?

Even the women know more than the men. In desperation I asked a girl in the class about my leg. She told me I had most correct legs. That is not true, but she meant that I did well to forget them, and attend to my fiddle. I agreed.

I have told the masters; they said: "Play on your head, little fool." I shall play, masters! I shall play.

September 18, 18—

**T**HREE days more, and then Vienna.

September 20, 18—

**L**UDMILA has already gone: she must rest on the way.

My father has packed my clothing. My father has remained beside me day and night for six days. My father! My father!

The possession of my father suddenly



## *Our Musician*

overwhelms me. Oh my dear father! In his presence I am as nothing; away from him I feel a giant in my ambition for his happiness. He will be in M—— and I in Vienna, but his hand will reach around the world for me. Perhaps I may never play but once for the public; perhaps Vienna will be the first and the last. The whole of Prague, which seems to be the world, awaits something—something from me.

I try to appreciate all that is expected of me. I suppose I shall better realize myself when I have reached Vienna;—I do not know, I am sure.

They have given up my leg: at last I have convinced them that it is my leg; and I hold my hair on my head until I reach Vienna.

This music man of business does not know of my determination; he thinks to transform me before Sunday night. It encourages him. Let him hope.

## *The Diary of*

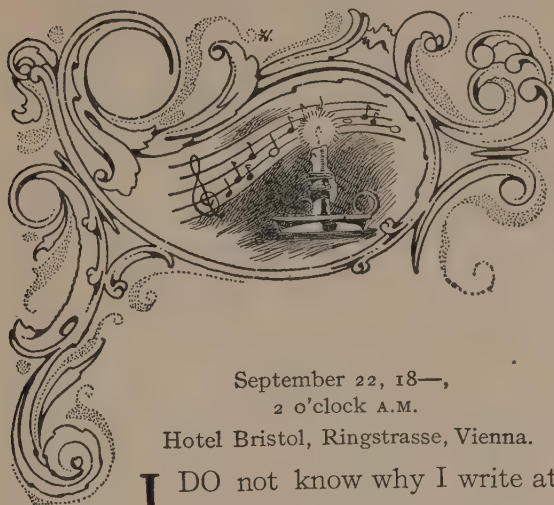
I have some exceedingly good clothing. I could fiddle better if the sleeves were shorter; however, if an inch of sleeve makes me less the peasant, let them make the most of it.

My harmony has got into my veins. I would it could get into my fingers and my violin. Hum—de—m-m-m.

Forty-eight hours hence, I play in Vienna. Ludmila is there.



# *Ca Musician*



September 22, 18—,  
2 o'clock A.M.

Hotel Bristol, Ringstrasse, Vienna.

**I** DO not know why I write at two o'clock in the morning; but perhaps because it is to write or go mad. Confusion of thought and feeling is destroying me. If I marshal my thoughts, and present them in order,—or perhaps if I limit this mental and emotional turmoil by trying to define my condition,—I shall regain my tranquillity.

In Vienna—and have played, for the first time, with a complete consciousness of my undertaking.

# *The Diary of*

I will set down the homely, natural thoughts and impulses of the heart, before I permit myself to chronicle the new, the maddening, the undefinable.

I did not reach this place until after noon. I believe I was to precede my engagement by some hours, but I only arrived at six o'clock. The luxuriousness of the carriage in which I rode to this hotel made it seem as something of the soul. The facilities for illumination and the bath—all things that speak to the body of comfort, and more—bring a message of distracting joy to me.

I revel in what I have yet to know, and am learning that there is always a luxury of living beyond that which I am experiencing.

I presented an unfamiliar appearance to myself, as I looked in the mirror before going to the hall.

They were right: certainly my physical appearance and movements do not seem

## *Ca Musician*

to belong to my attire; there is something obviously incongruous. I stood waiting the moment to play, cold and nerveless. When I stepped upon the stage I saw nothing but a black, limitless sea before me. That instant will never be accurately recalled by me. My first conscious moment was of Ludmila, who was in a box at my right; then suddenly I thought of her room. I was again in the Conservatory, and I know that involuntarily I drew for inspiration upon my hours with Josef. Then, by some strange process of memory, I slipped back, back to childhood and to home.

I was home, home, home again;—in the room where sleep my brothers and sister, my father and my mother. I stood before my father; the candle-flame leaped fitfully; the sob of my father's 'cello was in my ears; and suddenly I was marching; then, SOME—time—SOME—time—SOME—time—DA—da. Oh! My God!

## The Diary of

Ludmila and Vienna had vanished. It was father, father, my father! His great head, his strong arms, his gentle heart, our poverty, my hope; then—suddenly I felt that all was still, while I was struggling with the dream. I knew that I was elsewhere and must waken; and when the thunder from those listening people broke over me, it was to me a storm, breaking over the plains of M——, until human voices mingled—and then it was *Vienna*.

Vienna! Oh glorious, glorious night! Its perfume, its diamond lights that were for me; its sea of faces that was for me; its waving hands that were for me! it was as if I must take the whole world to my heart, or die of love of being.

It was minutes before the mist cleared from my eyes. I sought for Ludmila and could not see her; but I saw a face far back in the dusk of a half-lighted box,—a woman's face. A brilliant, glowing, fragrant thing, that shone in the dimness

## *Ca Musician*

of the box with a light all its own. It was like the sun at noon. I could not breathe or see or think or feel. It was Josef's voice behind me, out of sight, crying, "Wake up, Gipsy!" that roused me to withdraw, and to recover myself.

I played once more—and to the Sun. My God! But some strange thing has come upon me. To recall her presence makes my breath labored, as if I had been running. I shall surely see her again. The world seems to exist to make me happy, and to see her again, and again, and yet again—that only can make me happy.

I have a note from Ludmila. I am too tired. I must read it in the morning.

Less than two years ago I planted cabbages beside my father, and tended the swine that I might go to Prague. I dream, I die with joy and incredulity. Oh, the strange panic I feel in the midst of my happiness! My father, I am holding out my arms to you! I should not be

# *The Diary of*

here without you: I fear happiness as I once feared desolation. If at this moment you were by, I should preserve my boyhood that is going from me.

I am happy. I am mangled with joy and hope and love of life. I feel that I shall never sleep again.

September 22, 18—

**M**ORNING. The sun that warmed me from the dark box is a great and gracious Russian woman, who is stopping in Vienna. As rich as beautiful; as good as rich.

I shall cut my hair to-morrow.

When I think of my ungainly appearance to-night, of the unmanageable left leg, of the things that were the distraction of my master, I could die of shame.

This morning I seem to have been awake all night. I have not slept nor have I waked. It has been a half-sleeping, half-waking, and I am not refreshed.



## *Ca Musician*

I breakfasted before any one else in this place was out of bed except the servants, I fancy. Civilization seems to me to have been reduced to a hole in the wall: push a button, and the lights glow; push a button, and breakfast arrives; push a button, and open the door to God.

I pushed a button, and a little later I breakfasted. Presently I shall become used to this joyous living. It is no longer strange to me, though it is but twenty-four hours old.

I have read Ludmila's note. She expects me to go to see her at ten o'clock, or earlier. She wrote: "I shall not sleep, I shall not eat till I have told you all; — how splendid, how splendid it was."

I must go this morning. First of all I must get my hair cut. The consciousness of my unpleasing appearance has been with me in my half-waking, all night. I shall push a button. I must write to my

# *The Diary of*

father. I must practice that infernal third movement.

It is amazing how these people have mistaken my performance. While behind my fiddle, I would have sworn I was as great as they seemed to think me; but now, in the morning, I know better. I made them realize my own soul as I, for the instant, realized it;—that was all. And the night when I shall stand before a house full of people and find that my soul has departed for an hour,—has gone on a vacation as it were, then,—oh my father! where will be thy fine house? and oh, music man of business! where will be your percentage? I must think of a device by which to conceal such temporary departure of my soul.

Alas! had I Josef's perfect musical knowledge! That, allied with my perfect temperamental transports—!

It is not possible that I should continue this life and not be found out for

# *Ca Musician*

what I, this morning, know myself to be—an amateur of most artificial power. It means that I and my public have the strange faculty of going mad simultaneously. Yesterday I was an honest peasant. To-day I am—on the verge of something, I know not what. My pen wanders about thus on desultory subjects, because I dare not permit my frantic impulses to assert themselves. I have things to do.

I must write to my father.

I must get my hair cut.

I must see Ludmila—before night.

I MUST FIND OUT THE WOMAN IN THE  
BOX.

September 23, Midnight.

**H**ER name is Maria Alexeiévna Korniloff.

She is a Russian. She is a countess. She is in Vienna for three months. She is rich. She has a son. Her son is two years old. She has a husband, and he is at St. Petersburg. She lives in the Kolowratenring. She has fourteen servants.

## *The Diary of*

She has two brothers. She is twenty-eight years old. She is a patron of art. She is beyond the touch of my hand. She is out of reach even of my thought. I may never speak to her. Perhaps I may never see her. People in Vienna will come to hear me play because she was present that first night. I have heard my manager say so.

My hair is not cut off. This vile wretch who would leave me no peace before we came to Vienna, because I would not cut my hair, now refuses to keep to the contract if I cut it. "You can sue and be damned;—but cut your hair, and back you go to the plains." And back I would go to the plains, were it not for my father—and that woman.

I must be commanded by this cursed drover till I have seen my father made happy. I would have gone about the city. I had already pushed a button when he arrived this morning. I may not

## Ca Musician

ride in God's free air! I must eat my food like a stall-fed ox! I must have no existence outside this room! To Hell with him! Yes, I am the peasant—*all* a peasant. Let me but need him less, and *Sakramente!* I would make him less.

While he talked, I felt that my arm was made for something besides fiddling. I will go into the air and light. I will run my own concerns.

September 24, Midnight.

**I**T seems to be always midnight. I swear the drover's right eye will be midnight for ten days to come.

It happened as I left the concert-hall. The Countess Maria was again in the box. Men and women, lights, perfumes, the rustling of the people;—and all my veins ran fire. When I left the hall, I told the man who drives me to and from the hotel, to go into the light. I was hot. My heart thumped like an engine. I felt

## *The Diary of*

that I must be free. As I placed my foot upon the carriage-step, my cattle-driver came behind me, and ordered me to the hotel.

If one would be a musician, let him first pitch hay. My muscles are as smooth and pliant and invincible as fine leather, and the drover's eye is as black as my hat.

For all of that, he was up like a monkey; jammed me into the carriage, slammed the door, and was beside me before I could recover myself. Now I am here in these rooms;—and so help me Heaven, I can't get out! I have pushed these accursed buttons ever since the door closed on me, and there is no answer. I have no money. I do not know how I can get any money. I can write to my father, but I do not know that I can post the letter unless this fiend be willing. I am furious; I must be free to-morrow night to play for him.

## *Ca Musician*

I will do something to-morrow night.

I am filled with remorse: I should have gone to see Ludmila; I should have replied to her letters. I have had letters from her all the day, and again this evening. She writes that she must return to Prague.

She is ill; I am overwhelmed: I had forgotten her. No, I had not forgotten her. I thought of the Countess Maria Alexeiëvna Korniloff.

A woman so beautiful must be as good as an angel, and I may not even touch her hand. Mother of God! I may not even cut my hair. The thought of my situation is appalling me. If I had been conscious of my appearance when I saw her in the box to-night, I must have dropped my violin where I stood. I must make some sort of terms with this beast who drives me. Although I am but a youth, yet youth must have rights. I must find out what they are; if I have

# The Diary of

none I will assume some, and fight for what I assume.—*Sláva!* I am a fool! at this moment I see my way out. These expansive window-panes and fine furniture!—I am going to break up the establishment.

September 25, 18—

**I**F I am too fatigued to take advantage of the liberty that is now mine, yet it is pleasant to have secured it.

I have been as free as air since half-past midnight, and now it is afternoon. They beat upon the door and called to me to open. Each request encouraged me. By then, the drover who had the key had been found, and brought to my door. I was sweating like a wrestler, and there was nothing left to wreck but the bed.

I am quite free to do as I like.

I am now lodged in several rooms, instead of one. It was impossible for me to remain in the room where I was first



## *Ca Musician*

lodged, or indeed that any one should remain in it till the windows were restored. I was escorted to another part of the hotel. There was no place else for me until morning. There were two rooms; when I discovered that some people have two rooms, I bethought me that there might be those who have more than two.

It is true: I myself am living in five. I think my manager is likely to die: he contracted with my father to pay my expenses. The arrangement seems to me to be admirable. These five rooms certainly are very fine. My father has been telegraphed for. I have gained something all around.

If the man lives through my engagement, I think I shall find life desirable after all.

Since I learn that he is paying expenses, I will not kill him prematurely.



# *The Diary of*

September 25, 18—, Midnight.

**M**Y father is with me.

He arrived in Vienna to-night at five o'clock. I threw myself into his arms, as if we had been separated for years instead of four days. He came directly to my hotel, and had not seen the manager,—who arrived, however, almost simultaneously with my father.

My father came in haste, and consumed with anxiety. He had the telegram with him. It interested me: It was the first one I ever saw. It said: "Come instantly. Your son in trouble." He nearly fainted with joy to see me in excellent health and spirits.

Upon the arrival of my manager, there was an explanation. My father was taken to see the room I once occupied. He returned in raptures, fell into a chair, and roared with laughter, till the glass in the chandelier vibrated.

I told him my situation. My father

## Our Musician

was frightened at the matter of damages; I reminded him that our man of business must pay them, and my father was restored. The manager, however, declared that such expense was to be withheld from my money. I told him to “*Sue and be damned,—but keep to his contract, or back I would go to the plains.*”

*Sláva!* All Vienna is X—— mad, and I believe H—— and I understand each other better now. I have explained that I must have exercise, and if it pleases him better that I should exercise within doors instead of without—and in my own way—I shall try to be satisfied;—if the hotel is.

I fancy that H—— and I, through my father, will come to some satisfactory terms.

My father, who returns to-morrow, has spoken seriously with me since the concert this evening.

After the concert I was again weary and excited, and we drove about. I returned

## The Diary of

pleasantly fatigued, and more contented with my life. I pointed out the beautiful Russian woman to my father, from behind the door. He, too, thinks she is beautiful; H—— also spoke of her to my father, I am certain; I did not hear, but I saw them speak apart, while my father became grave, and looked at her for some moments; afterward, he spoke and looked again. I referred to her almost constantly while driving. My father knows a great deal, I am certain. I have always thought thus. He knows of women like her; maybe he has even spoken with such; indeed I *know* that he has; because to-night he said—after a silence when I had questioned him—that he had known a woman as beautiful as that. He had been her gardener. It excited me strangely to learn of this. Questions came so fast they choked me, but he would answer me nothing. He said: “Well, well! It was long ago. I was as young as you are—

## *Ca Musician*

younger. It is not for us to remember women who—well, whose gardens we may have made.”

I could but draw comparisons between this Star of Heaven and the mill-girl. I spoke of that. He said: “They are not so unlike, after all.”

While my beloved father has much knowledge, I fear he has not much discrimination. However, this much is decided: according to my father’s wish I am to be free—free as light and air; but I am to remember his preferences. He desires me to go about unaccompanied, unless by Josef, who is now playing in an orchestra at the Kleine Musik-Halle.

I am to eat simple food. There is food to be had in this city, so subtly compounded, that it could not be analyzed by a chemist to save him from starvation. I long to live off these mysteries. I am to drink but milk as I have always done, while there are as many things to drink

## The Diary of

as one has wishes; I have seen these wines below, in the *Jidelna*. Above all, I am to concentrate my mind upon my music; and he desires that I should make the acquaintance of some woman friends of H——'s.

*Sakra!* women known to the drover? I am ill.

My father tells me that this fellow has some pleasing female friends;—maybe his sisters—or his cousins. I imagine them! My father assures me that they are unrelated, but I would not trust the wretch.

If it pleases my father, I will have no companionship but Josef's; but I protest against the women folk known to my manager. No more square women! I may not so much as stand in the presence of this sunlit woman of the box. Such women I may never meet; hence; I will know no others. My father disagrees. He frowned, and was displeased, but in this I will please myself. I would rather

## *Ca Musician*

dream of her, than 'spend my life with every mill-girl of Bohemia.

My father had some strange thought. I inferred this from his voice, his gravity, his surprise. He asked quite suddenly about Ludmila. I was stunned: I had forgotten. There were a dozen notes from Ludmila lying on my table at that moment. If any woman could regard any man as I regard the sunlit woman, what wretchedness would be hers! Ludmila cannot regard me with that ecstasy which has been born within me since I looked upon that Russian woman;—but I doubt not that she thinks of me as kindly as I do of her.

Since it will especially please my father, I will be certain to see her. My father went at once to her address even so late as this, because he must return home to-morrow. I cannot imagine what he can have to say to her that will not wait.

I did not stop at Ludmila's with him,

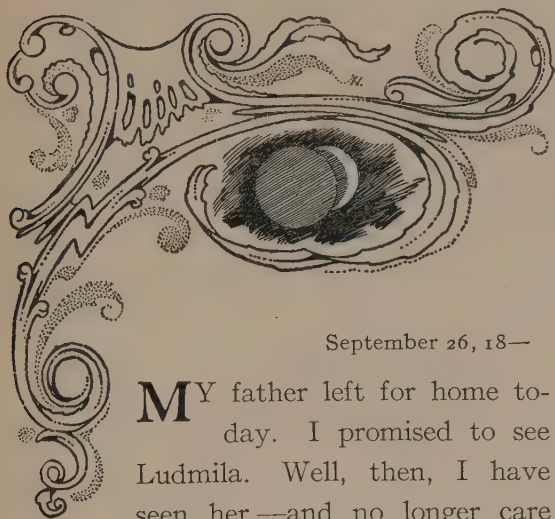
# *The Diary of*

but have returned here to write, since thus  
I may the better isolate my thoughts, and  
let them dwell uninterruptedly upon HER  
—the Russian.





# Ca Musician



September 26, 18—

**M**Y father left for home to-day. I promised to see Ludmila. Well, then, I have seen her,—and no longer care for her. She has changed. I am certain this is so. I fancy she must be very ill. She did not reproach me because I had not been there before; but she threw herself upon me in a way that offended me. I repulsed her: I can no longer tolerate her emotion. Afterward she sat quietly, and spoke of my success, and of many things; but I could not rid myself of a kind of anxiety created by her presence.

# *The Diary of*

I left as soon as possible. I do not mean to go again. I am sorry to observe that she is so ill. She told me that she should leave Vienna for Prague to-morrow. I am relieved, though I know not why.

When he left, my father had said happily: "You and Ludmila will become devoted, I am sure. I should not wonder if she does not leave Vienna till you go. Remember that you have money, and may spend a reasonable amount upon your friends. You might even have them with you elsewhere, after you have left Vienna, should you care to have them." This was pleasing, I am sure; however, I do not know of anything I wish to do for my friends unless, indeed, to give Josef a Stradivarius.

To touch that Russian woman's hand I would give all but that single moment of my life.



# Ca Musician

September 27, 18—

JOSEF joined me at the *Halle*, and drove to the Bristol with me to-night. He says he had some conversation with my father, the day before yesterday. I am much fonder of Josef than I can say; he is big and strong and gay and enjoys his life; he will direct an orchestra one day. I dare say he never longed for anything in his life, as I long daily for the most trivial things. I hope he is sincerely fond of me. He is a strange fellow with strange thoughts. He said again, upon leaving me: "Wake up: you have a great future." And as he was about to turn away, he took me by the shoulders and shouted: "Don't be a fool!"

We leave for Berlin two days hence. God keep me in my wits!

I feel that I must have help. I do not know what can serve me.

In the day, the thought of the Russian causes me to have a sensation in my

# *The Diary of*

breast that makes me faint. At such a moment I am sure that my heart ceases to beat. If thoughts of her overtake me, I am unable to take my food. She is in the box each night. When I first behold her I am unable to play; but an instant later my soul is flooded with music,—the only means I have of speaking to her. This fellow H—— told me last night to face my audience. I have tried to do so, but when I finish I am playing to her.

Once she smiled, but it could not have been at me. Often she has guests beside her. I cannot distinguish them, because she fills all my sight. Now I drive about Vienna till nearly day: I should go mad if I returned to these rooms. My hands tremble; I have a fever. I believe I must write that harmony. It is my only escape from the madness that is possessing me.

# *The Musician*

September 29, 18—

I SAW the naked hand of Maria Alexeiëvna Korniloff as she rested it, ungloved, upon the ledge of her box. I have never seen a hand like hers. It is as dissimilar from Ludmila's, as was hers from the hand of the mill-girl. I forgot—Ludmila is dead. Died this afternoon, Josef told me. He received a telegram from the Conservatory. The pupils—something about the funeral. I told Josef to do something for me. He said: "What are you made of?"

He thinks me hard and cold. Why, I am as soft as a little child: if my father should break his arm I could never play again. My temperature?—God! I am burning with fever.

With Maria Alexeiëvna living, who mourns for Ludmila dead!



# *The Diary of*

September 30, 18—

**I** HAVE a note before me; it says:

“The Countess Maria Alexeiëvna Korniloff would be honored by the presence of Herr X—— at supper, after the concert to-night.”

I wrote: “I am coming.” She answered: “I am happy.”

Jesus Christ!

October 1, 18—

**T**O-NIGHT will be my last night in Vienna.

It is now two o'clock in the day. I am unable to play. H——raved. I fired the water-bottle at his head. I refuse ever to play again. In the name of God, how can I play to-night? I am prostrated. Last night the Countess sat in her box with guests, and I played as I did not believe I should ever play. While all the house was pulsing with my music, I saw only the words, “The—Countess—Maria—would—be—honored.”

# Ca Musician

Josef awaited me, without. I told him where I was going; he said: "Keep your head." I directed the driver. I entered her *palais*. It is Paradise. Rooms, rooms,—and so vast! Lights, lights,—and so sparkling! I looked about me while I waited for her; she had just arrived at home, and was to be with me instantly.

When she came, I went blind and deaf. She spoke, she smiled,—and my soul perceived it, but not my ears, not my eyes. She did not touch my hand though both were stretched toward her. I know this to be so.

We withdrew to a higher heaven. Her presence was as a benediction, and she seemed to float before me. I did not speak, save to answer her. We supped in a sea of dusky shadows, and soft glints of rose. The little lights on the table hid the half of her face, leaving her soft chin and neck to my view, while her eyes gleamed

## *The Diary of*

in the dusk above. She asked if I was fatigued after the night. I said:

“No, Madam.”

She asked me if I would sup then or later. I said:

“As you please, Madam.”

Each time I spoke, I think she smiled and bowed her head slightly, and was like a nodding flower upon a tall stalk. She said to me:

“You will sit?” indicating a place before her.

I said: “Yes, Madam”, and sat.

She sat. She fingered the glasses about her. I sat with my hands clasped tightly beneath the table, lest I precipitate myself upon her, and place my hands upon her naked shoulders. My eyes were burning in my head. I looked neither to the right nor to the left, but before me, at Maria Alexeiévna; frequently she looked at me. She said:

“What can I do to please you best?”



# *Ca Musician*

I answered her:

"Speak to me, Madam."

She laughed—a gentle ripple, and I said: "Laugh for me like silver."

She looked at me with a bird glance and said:

"You enchant me."

I did not know her meaning and I did not reply.

"Do you ride?" she asked.

"Better than Vaclav Kral—and he rides well."

She hesitated, she smiled, she said: "Oh,—yes. We will ride to-morrow in the Prater. But you eat nothing."

I answered her:

"I will eat, Madam." And broke my bread.

She replied: "We must be friends."

I answered: "I will lie at your feet."

Again, the bird-like turn of her head. "You please me"; and "Have you always lived in M——?"

## *The Diary of*

I answered: "I have never lived there—only here, beside you."

She stood up and then quickly sat again and looked annoyed. I was in despair.

I said: "I have offended you."

She replied in a strange voice: "No, no. It was I. Be at ease. What do you drink?"

I answered: "That which you recommend, Maria Alexeiëvna."

She poured me wine, motioning back the man who stood in the shadow by some sparkling glass. I tasted, and thought of—milk? My very veins ran a fine dry champagne!

In time she said: "It is the hour for you to go"; and again she nodded like a flower upon its stalk. I went from the room, while the man emerged from the shadow to open the curtains behind me. I went backward, that I might look at her till the curtains fell between us. She

## *Ca Musician*

stood and smiled, and her wonderful hands were upon the back of her chair. I had nearly gone when I sprang forward, and grasped her hands,—and kissed and kissed and kissed. My God! But Maria Alexeiëvna did not speak, or look, or seem to know.

I returned to these rooms and threw myself upon my bed. I do not seem to wake yet. I ride with her in an hour.

When H——, this fellow who pays, came to my apartment, I was still as when he left me at the *Halle* last night,—dressed and lying upon my bed. I told him not to depend upon me for to-night, also that I will not go to Berlin, where we are due two nights hence. I shall remain here and write my harmony,—flowers, nodding upon tall stalks.

Joy like this is almost Hell.



# *The Diary of*

October 1, 18—

I HAVE changed my mind, and shall play to-night: she has said so.

All Vienna followed us as we rode. I could not wonder. I should expect the universe to wait without her door. I told her I must sup with her to-night. Impossible! Others will be with her, she tells me. She referred to the concert to-night; she is to be present with guests. I told her of my purpose not to play.

“Ah, no, you must play for me!” she exclaimed. Enough! I shall play! Providence seems to be watching over H——. When he looks at me he tears his hair;—also I am going to Berlin: she must go next week.

I told her that I, too, went there to play. I shall remind H—— of my amiability the next time he disturbs me.



# *Ca Musician*

October 3, 18—,  
Berlin.

**S**HE is not here. I played last night and did not see her.

If she has not arrived to-morrow I shall leave for Vienna. I have notified H——. He is insane.

October 4, 18—,  
Berlin.

**S**HE has not come. I am off.

October 5, 18—,  
Berlin.

**S**TILL in Berlin. I shall remain; I don't know how long. Immediately I had written here last night, I received a note from her:

“Pray breakfast with me in the morning.”

Have notified H—— that my plans have changed.



# The Diary of

October 6, 18—,  
Berlin.

I SHALL remain here for three days.

The original engagement was for two weeks; but the Countess goes to Paris, where indeed I was due two weeks hence for a long engagement; I shall go in three days,—when she goes.

I breakfasted with her. I went too soon. I thought it meant at breakfast-time. I was at her *palais* at eleven o'clock, and I found she would not be visible for two hours. I lived through them, and returned.

She is more beautiful than the day. I have been with her for the third time. I do not know which is the more tremendous sensation,—to behold her beautiful shoulders, or to look at her gown which covers them in the day, and imagine them. I think and think.—If the day should come when I might touch her hand! That can never be. I know this, but no harm can come of thinking of it.

## Ca Musician

At breakfast, she asked me about the night I broke the windows and furniture at the Bristol. I was astounded that she could have known. I learn that all Vienna knew. I have never read the journals, but I shall do so hereafter. I told her the circumstance, and she was amused. It had not occurred to me before that it was amusing.

She will be at the concert to-night,—because now it is nearly day and I may no longer say “to-morrow”.—I have thought of her all night.

October 7, 18—

**SLÁVA!** Providence is all for H—.

I have notified him that I remain in Berlin, and that the concerts may go on.

The Countess Maria is detained. Her detention is worth five hundred thousand florins to H—.

To-morrow night I dine at her *palais* with others. I shall deport myself with

## *The Diary of*

credit. I know the use of all the glasses and table equipment,—even of the little pitchforks. I observe much, and what I did not know I asked of her. She told me.

October 8, 18—

**T**O-NIGHT I dined with her. My father! He could not have known of what he spoke.

The journals refer to me in the same paragraph with her. I do not understand all this. It cannot be pleasant to her to be spoken of with a peasant like myself. I must beg her forgiveness. I tried to discuss it to-night. She was an angel: she smiled.

I believe my daily visits to the Countess Maria's house,—and her breakfasts and her dinners,—are not what my father understands me to be engaged in. I adore my father; but who would keep faith with his father when such a woman smiles?



## *Our Musician*

My father would think me a fool, certainly, to obey him. It is Maria Alexeiëvna! There is no superior allegiance.

October 10, 18—

**I** HAVE written my harmony.

Each day I go to Maria Alexeiëvna's. Sometimes I remain but a moment, but each day I see her. I shall play my harmony. I should like to become famous now: she wishes me to be. She told me so. I shall tell no one, but I shall play my harmony on my last night here;—the Countess must hurry to Paris ahead of me.

Heaven still favors H——.

When her affairs are settled, so that she may no longer move about thus, my concerts will cease.

I shall reveal the harmony to no one. I wish that my father might be present. I shall become great in a night; in an

# *The Diary of*

instant. I shall announce the composer the following day, after I have been heard without prejudice. I believe that nothing has ever been written so absorbing. It is for her. It is she,—her hair, her eyes, her lips, her smooth white shoulders. I have sat before her, and watched the gentle rise and fall of her warm flesh as she breathed, till I have become confused and have been seized with vertigo. She never observes this: she is so calm, so tranquil.

I shall play the harmony as an after-piece.

October 11, 18—

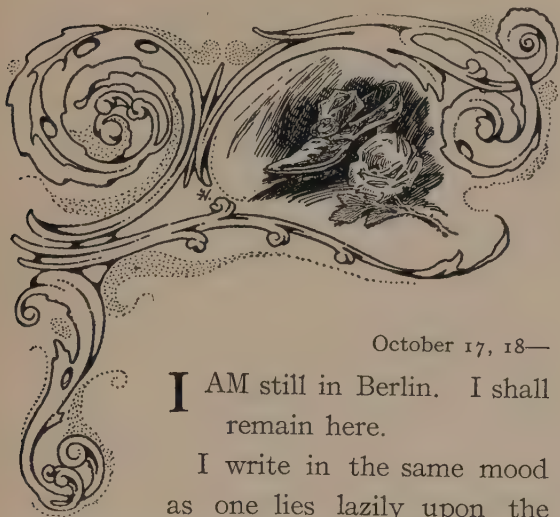
**I** DID not see Maria Alexeiëvna, to-day.

October 13, 18—

**I** PLAY here for the last time to-morrow night. I have told the Countess of my harmony: I could not help it. She will be there.



# Ca Musician



October 17, 18—

I AM still in Berlin. I shall remain here.

I write in the same mood as one lies lazily upon the grass, and watches the clouds go by.

I write only as a matter of record,—as I wrote upon the night that my father told me that I should go to Prague. I wonder how this page will impress me in after-years? Unlike that other page, this is certainly not written for perusal by my children.

There! As I write, lassitude leaves me, and my desire to curse the world exasperates me to activity.

## *The Diary of*

Curse it! The world, the Countess Maria Alexeiëvna, my soul, my body, Art, all! I could scream like a woman when I think of myself as I existed four days ago.

Ah! The spectacle I must have presented to all who knew the simplicity of my mind!

If I knew the man who may have found me amusing—!

The blindness of my soul to my flesh is enough to drive me mad.

First,—I shall never play again; that is done for.

In reading what I last wrote here, I find that I knew hope and joy and the power of genius, no longer ago than four days. All has vanished.

After the last piece, on the night of the fourteenth, I played my harmony,—my wonder of wonders. Not a sound, not a sign,—and I could not see Maria Alexeiëvna's face for the mist before my eyes.

# *Ca Musician*

In time, the house awoke and spoke. I rushed off blinded by my tears of happiness, and H—— greeted me: “Why did you play that after-piece? Go back to the Conservatory: even the audience hardly stood for it. You are puerile.—Wait for the morning journals.”

By God! all that oppressive silence which I had interpreted as self-repression, and as the stunning effect of an overwhelming success, was, instead, a moment of effort on the part of the audience to summon its habitual enthusiasm. If that beast had struck me, I had stood at that moment for the blow.

Presently I knew myself again, and then I rushed out into the night air. As I entered my carriage, I realized that some one was within, but in the shadow of the side street and the dark of the carriage interior, I could see no one. I was in an abandon of grief and humiliation. Since the hour when I first drew my bow

## *The Diary of*

in public, the people have risen to embrace me. The man who can play without the stimulation of approval, is a jew's-harp.

I stumbled into the carriage, and put out my hand, and it was clasped by a naked hand; and the touch thrilled me to the heart. I cannot define the emotion I felt in that moment when I knew Maria Alexeiévna to be beside me.

After the remarkable three days that have passed, I can still recall the feel of her arms about me—virgin to me. I shall remember that sensation of wonderful madness, in my grave;—an electrical shock that deprived me of further sensation.

That was two nights and a day ago.

My soul is sick. I dare not laugh, and should like to weep like a woman. I now recall that I used to weep as women do.

I am not ungrateful to Maria Alexeiévna; but oh, mother of God! I am sick—of *all* things,—especially of this flesh of mine!

There! I see the flutter of a ribbon

## *Ed Musician*

upon her shoulder,—and the folds of her gown as it lay upon the floor.

These stupid details pass through my brain like light-flashes.

I had a scene with H——. I learn that he has sent for me hourly. He has fairly besieged the Countess's doors.

It has cost five thousand florins.

My engagements in Paris are canceled if H—— follows my advice; I doubt if he does, however. He has announced that I am overfatigued, and will reach Paris later.—All of which is true, I fancy.

Her teeth are like assorted pearls, and snap like a wolf's.

Ah! since I continue to think of her, I will send for her.

October 29, 18—

**S**TILL in Berlin. Drove out to-day.

Josef came to my hotel, having arrived from Vienna. His engagements are following mine for a time—or were, when I had any engagements.

## *The Diary of*

He looked at me and said: "Don't take life too seriously; it is of no consequence."

When I recall the scenes on concert nights, when the women used to pluck their emotions out by the roots, and throw them upon the stage, it sickens me.

As a matter of fact, the immodesty of women is appalling; while the native modesty of man is not possible of explanation.

October 31, 18—

**S**INCE I have broken my contract with H——, and am paying my own bills, I am amazed how much life is costing me.

November 1, 18—

**S**TILL in Berlin. Don't know why. This woman nauseates me,—so does life. I wonder if all women are alike?





# *Ca Musician*

November 2, 18—

N<sup>O</sup>.

Fearful essentials to man!

Bah! I must have some money.

There is some relation between empty champagne-bottles and an empty purse. Some men think their philosophies. I seem to be living mine.

November 3, 18—

I FANCY I must have some money.

November 4, 18—

STILL in Berlin. I fancy a man's interest in women is largely scientific. He approaches a woman in a spirit of investigation.

I suppose there is not one unobtainable woman in the world.

November 5, 18—

I REMEMBER the mill-girl. If one were to shingle the Countess Maria, for example!—As a matter of fact this incongruous thought occurred to me in

## The Diary of

her presence, and I laughed outright. I am hysterical. If I do not rid myself of these female tendencies, I will strangle myself.

November 6, 18—

**I** BELIEVE that I must have some money.

November 7, 18—

**I** WONDER if the drover is still in Berlin.

November 8, 18—

**S**TRANGE qualities impress the Countess.

To-night she said: "It pleases me to see you drink your wine; you are as insatiable in that, as in everything else;—like a peasant in endurance."

I reminded the lady that I *am* a peasant—in fact, as well as in endurance. The thought pleased her. If I were a gentleman or even a gentlewoman, a *mesalliance* would appal me; however, I believe that women are not fastidious.

# Ca Musician

When I taste, it is the epicure within me which presides; when women feast, it is for very love of debauchery.

November 9, 18—

AS I started for the Countess's *palais* to-day, I met H——. Evidently he is in town. He asked me if he could not lend me some money. I laughed. The fraud knows that I am in debt, above the waist; that I cannot pay my bills here. He expects me to renew the contract and “on” to Paris. Well—

November 10, 18—

I HAVE renewed the contract with H——, and he advanced me money; not much, the beggar! When I pressed him for more, he was insolent. “I’ll get you as far as Paris first, confound you,” he said.

He settled up these damned hotel bills, however. I owe three thousand florins for clothes here.

# *The Diary of*

November 11, 18—

**W**E leave for Paris to-morrow.

Maria follows a week later. I have advised her to wait till I send for her: God knows what I shall feel like doing in Paris!

She agreed to wait a week. It is her affair if she chooses to follow.

November 14, 18—

**G**LORIOUS Paris!

I fancy the Countess may as well come now as later. I have telegraphed for her.

November 17, 18—

**M**ARIA arrived this morning. She will have a hotel in the Rue de Courcelle. I play to-night. The house is sold out, they tell me. I had better keep up to it. I fancy H—— has me fast. It is play or starve.



# *Ed Musician*

November 19, 18—

**T**HE difference between Russian and French women is subtle. The one stuns a man, the other absorbs him.

H—— is niggardly with money. I learn that when my father was in Vienna, he made some different arrangement about the money, after a talk with H——. I am no longer able to get at money as I choose. I may apply to my father; he would not refuse me; but that I must apply to him so often, is a restraint upon my inclinations.

November 21, 18—

**M**ARIA'S presence is economy.

It is not pleasant to think thus.

November 22, 18—

**S**INCE the thought above occurred to me, I no longer find satisfaction in Maria's presence. That base thought of money which has intruded itself, is disastrous. I mentioned this to Maria.

# *The Diary of*

November 30, 18—

**G**REAT Heaven! Maria Alexeiëvna knows her value, when she chooses to assay herself. I must apply to my father.

Her ready trick upon me fascinates me.

December 3, 18—

**M**Y engagement is running on successfully here. I have gained in Art, with all this burst of the material. I am more and more reducing my emotions to method. I have already learned to subdue the fact when my soul frequently takes that vacation I used to dread. I doubt, however, if I shall ever deserve the enthusiasm that is given me.

I do not know if it matters should no one else discover it.



# *Ca Musician*

December 5, 18—

**I** SHALL not play at the holiday season.

A sudden longing for home, for the conditions of my father and my family, has overtaken me. At Christmas-time I shall go home. I shall make actual, that of which I used to dream. I shall have my father move into the town. I shall see them settled in Prague before I return here, where I shall play a post-Lenten season.

I return to Berlin sometime between. I do not know just what dates we have.

I frequently think of Ludmila. It is as if a curtain that obscured all fact, had been suddenly snatched from before me, these past months. I could certainly not have loved Ludmila Masék: she was of my own class; I could not have loved her, even though I know that she had a spirit above her fate. But she hesitated; finally withdrew in the face of my obtuseness,

# *The Diary of*

rather than force upon me the materialism of her own impulses. Since Ludmila is the only woman I have ever known with enough force of character, or of keen enough sensibilities, to do this, she necessarily has a place apart in my thoughts.

Could I have known a woman like her, above my class, I doubt not I should have loved her.

I do not know that I have any reason to expect Fate to create such a woman for my desires. However, Fate has done very well by me, if I were in the mood to be grateful.

December 9, 18—

**I**F the Countess will not go away, I shall certainly throw up these final concerts. I am tired—sick to death—of her. I want to be left alone with my anticipations of the New Year, when I shall be again with my father. My only refuge is in music; daily I shut myself up, and practice like the devil.



## *Our Musician*

At such times, I may project my thought where I will, and get away from an atmosphere that of late stifles me.

I wish Josef Jaroslav could be with me: his glowing health and open, fine face would be to me a tonic. I want a tonic.

At this moment Maria is without my door, quarreling with my servant. Damn her! I'll rent a cell.

December 11, 18—

**H**OLÀ! Maria Alexeiévna has gone to St. Petersburg, the remainder of the women to the devil, I to my fiddle,—presently to my father. To-day, a glowing letter from him. He, too, is in a panic of haste to clasp me in his arms.

My entire success satisfies him. I wish that my excellence in music satisfied me. I should never become a great musician in a thousand years. It amuses me now and then, when a critic discovers this. It is discovered somewhat oftener now

# *The Diary of*

than then, but it does not seem to affect the receipts.

Give the public superfluous hair, an awkward pose, a something else indefinable—whatever it is, is not substantial—and the public gives in return, unlimited success.

*Hourrá!* Maria Alexeiévna is out of Paris.

December 15, 18—

**I** AM slowly working out the secret of this phenomenal success. After all, it is a substantial thing—this secret.

It is that war of good and bad,—of material and spiritual,—a self-absorption peculiarly the effect of genius,—that gives to certain of us a power which is beyond comprehension. I study conscientiously, notwithstanding my conviction that I never can command more than a limited degree of excellence in my art. This concentration of action and purpose is creditable to any one. The public gives me

## *Ca Musician*

everything. I mean to give to it the best that is within me.

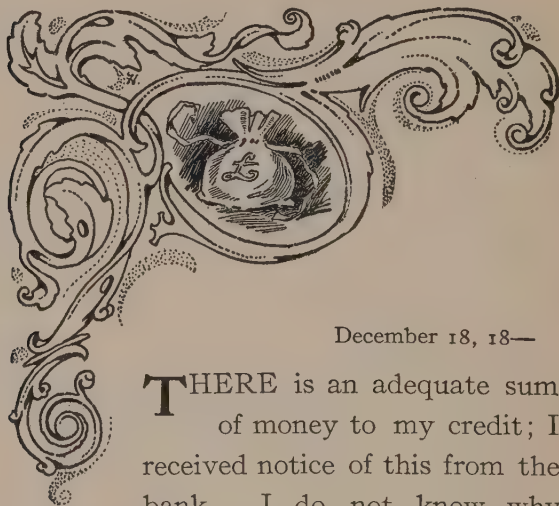
My contempt of the public has given way to a sounder understanding of human nature. There is a sympathy above Art,—stronger than perfection,—more certain than love. It so happens that I can command this sympathy. Intellectually, I am undeveloped, even ignorant. To compensate for this, I have an alarming facility for extracting all the truth from my surroundings.

I doubt if I could reveal the process by which I arrived with absolute certainty and precision at conclusions; but my least instinct is as true as the best wisdom of others. I have frequently observed this.

Maria Alexeiévna is still in St. Petersburg. *Sláva!*



# The Diary of



December 18, 18—

**T**HERE is an adequate sum of money to my credit; I received notice of this from the bank. I do not know why my father has turned this money over to me. I should write him, excepting that business can wait until we are together. I count the days.

One week hence, I shall be with him. I close here on the twenty-second.

I am glad of this adjustment of my finances. I shall be able to carry out all my holiday plans for the family, without consultation. Paris has been tremen-

## *Ca Musician*

dously successful. H—— is America-mad. I suppose we shall proceed there in the course of time. It seems a long way off,— and cold. It is as good a place to play in as another, I suppose.

December 19, 18—

I AM minded to send for Alexeiëvna Korniloff.

December 21, 18—

WHY is Maria like a symphony ?  
Why is Maria like Nightingales' tongues?

Why is Maria?

December 22, 18—

THE morning is fresh, beautiful, full of health; I have practiced here in the sun, for an hour; it is not yet breakfast-time. I leave for Prague tomorrow, where my father will meet me. The beautiful dreams of my childhood are about to be fulfilled and my father is to

## *The Diary of*

find peace, plenty, and perfect satisfaction in life. I fancy that next year he may frequently go about with me. His presence will be a constant stimulation to me to do my best.

I have seen many men of many classes in the past year, but of them all, I believe my father to be a man wholly superior to others. He has the rugged physique of the hard-working peasant, the tenderness of some women, the enthusiasm of a clear soul, the wisdom of a thoughtful man. I have been favored above most others. Every memory of my father is replete with love, reason, unselfishness, and with uniform kindness. These facts rush over my soul at times, with a glorious yet restraining influence that cannot be described.

If I believed that I should ever rear a son who would place his best thoughts, his best good in life, thus to my credit,—I should feel that my life had not been in vain, though I am a musician.

# *The Musician*

## *Editor's Note*

AT this point there occurs a hiatus of more than a year; and all that is found to mark the period, is the following clipping from a Paris journal, placed between the loose sheets of the diary. It bore the date of December 24, 18—. "The violinist, Herr X—, is prostrated at his hotel by the news of his father's sudden death. He cannot be interviewed, and his plans for the coming season are indefinite. His engagement here, closed last night. He received the distressing news as he was leaving the Opera House."









February 1, 1900.  
London, Hotel Savoy.

**I** LIKE this new chap who has my affairs in hand, very well. My season is young, and for some reason I do not feel much interest in it; but so far as one may tolerate a manager, I tolerate Y——: a good, all round, perspicacious fellow.

Maria Korniloff has arrived, and will take apartments. The weather here depresses me. I am playing fairly well. The summer spent with Josef did me an indefinite amount of good.—Splendid fellow!

# *The Diary of*

I have a fool for an accompanist. Y—— must look out for something better than this.

I do not know what to do with the jewels given me by the Servian. Maria wants them. I know of no reason why she should not have them, except an obscure, undefined reason that is within myself. Neither is there any reason why she should want them, except the eternal feminine,—a desire for more than she knows what to do with.

When I want Maria to return to St. Petersburg I shall give her the jewels. She should be able to enjoy her home, and even her own husband, for a week, if she has those jewels to play with. It is a good, a profitable thought.

The study of Maria is a sort of a scientific passion with me,—as a fine bridge might be if I were an engineer; as a public building might be, if I were an architect. There is a rare, technical excellence about Maria

## *Ca Musician*

Alexeiëvna. She has conserved her powers with an indescribable tact and discretion. When I first knew her, she was twenty-eight years old, and as beautiful as a dream; not an ounce of flesh too much, not an ounce more to be desired. At that time she did nothing,—nothing but exist; it was enough. She had no need to exercise her coquetries, no need of glance or shrug, or help of that artificial piquancy which is the capital of so many less clever women. “Come sup with me, come dine with me, come look upon me.” It was enough. The man supped or dined or looked, and he was Maria Alexeiëvna’s. She but needed to be.

True—when he supped again, perhaps Maria forgot herself; but at most, what she did was for her own gratification. She troubled herself little about another. I recall the time when Maria discovered that I was in need of money:—that time when she learned that she no longer

## *The Diary of*

pleased me, simply because she cost me nothing when I could have paid for nothing. Within the week, she became inordinately extravagant in her mercenary demands, with an art which I am tempted to believe a man less instinctive than myself would never have interpreted.

She was prepared to ruin me, but was not prepared to be neglected.

Later, Maria became to me—who acquire strong attachments even to a hotel room at the end of four weeks' occupation, or to a piece of furniture if it has been for any length of time in my possession—she became to me an institution. A kind of gravestone upon which were indelibly recorded, for my own perusal, all sorts of moments and all sorts of moods, together with the chronicle of the early death of my illusions. When she discovered this, she ceased to bankrupt me. I was never able to give her anything that she could not have acquired for herself,

## *Ca Musician*

therefore she never wanted anything that I could give her. But her whim had served her turn;—my turn, I confess it. Maria Alexeiëvna's device pleased me. It was good technique in feminine art. It was excellence.

To be sure, Maria wants the Queen's gift to me of last year;—that is because I had not dined with her for a week before I left Belgrade, whither she had come. She has now come post-haste to London, to say she wants the Servian's jewels. She knew it would cause me an uncomfortable half-hour. It meant that I must consider, refuse, hesitate, palter, be generous, withdraw; that I must—*Sākramente!* It meant that I must entreat—and say: “Do not weep”—because, was she not weeping like a cataract, and was as beautiful as an houri as she dissolved, with her head upon the mantelpiece? Of course! And if he undertake to comfort a woman with however much discretion,

# *The Diary of*

a man stands to lose his fortune before day. And so Maria Korniloff came post-haste from St. Petersburg to say: "Give me those jewels, or I'll prove to you for the thousandth time that you can't resist me." And she spoke with a certainty that the alternative put the jewels out of reach. Maria knew that her threat made her charming, irresistible, on the instant. Her recognition of my indifference, and her assurance of her own power, gave me back to Maria.

Upon one occasion I did not see her nor hear from her in three months,—except as the journals chronicled her doings,—her devotion to Art and to genius (both struggling and successful)—and then there was a young gipsy, to whose Art she was reported as giving five thousand pounds. I read it in a Paris paper. On my honor I pitied the young devil! but a kind of elation pervaded my being. It occurred to me that Maria might have

## *Ca Musician*

taken herself or the gipsy seriously. I experienced all this intelligent emotion with Maria at a distance. Two days after reading this, I heard my servant and Alexeiëvna quarreling with their accustomed enthusiasm, outside my door, at a time when I had need of rest.

Later, Maria swore there had been no gipsy. For two weeks I was as jealous as a young husband with an old wife; till one morning, the facts of the situation burst upon me:—Maria was telling the truth,—there had been no gipsy. When I had accused her, for the purpose of getting rid of her, she had faltered and sighed and shrugged and reminded me of my neglect, and of a thousand things that ordinarily would have been indifferent to me; and before I was aware, I had become involved, and believed in the gipsy. I had broken the furniture and had wished to strangle her, and had felt that joyous gush of peasant blood that is within me;—then

## *The Diary of*

one day she laughed—that laugh which is hers when she is irresistibly amused. There *had* been no gipsy. She was frank. She could afford to tell the truth: I had settled down again to the habit of Maria's proximity; but on that day I perceived that a new period in Maria Alexeiëvna's life had arrived. She had left off loafing, and had gone to work; it was no longer enough that she should sit and be looked upon. Maria must henceforth resort to artifice. It would seem that a year must bankrupt any woman of such resources. A man has but half a dozen coqueties at his command, at best, and those are fatuous; but Maria has presented to me a new phase of the Countess Korniloff, day after day, month after month, with little interruption; and to me she is still the unexpected, and it is she, consequently, who always happens.

She happened this morning. I was delighted to greet her, but I could not sup-



## *The Musician*

press a smile of amusement, and she surprised it.

"You have no need to smile, Herr X——", she said at first haughtily. Then in a mighty temper which grew as she talked: "Do not flatter yourself that I am here for love; no love on earth is warm enough to bring me from St. Petersburg to London in such weather. I have come for those Servian trinkets. I am to wear them at the Court within the week. Get them, X——, I have no time for argument or protestations."—I had made none.

Her enchanting audacity and assumption of rage so aroused my appreciation of Maria's art, that I opened my arms and said: "Forget the ball, Maria; it is in St. Petersburg. I am playing in London, and living in misery at this hotel,—with nothing to eat, and only Englishmen to look at."

"English women", she interrupted.

## The Diary of

"English *men*;—I never look at English women if I can avoid it."

"Oh!" said Maria Alexeiëvna, and abandoned the Kremlin. But I had no sooner sat at breakfast with Maria, and thought: "After all, perhaps I was indiscreet: perhaps I should have seemed to take her at her word and given her the jewels and started her back to St. Petersburg"—I had hardly become conscious that I was about to conceive this thought, than Maria said:

"Why did your wretched fellow refuse to let me in this morning?"

"He is devoted to my interests; he wished me to rest."

"Indeed, I suppose it is his discretion for which you pay."

"I sometimes rest, Maria."

And so we fell to wrangling over Maria's suspicions, until the coffee became cold. I became distracted in an attempt to reassure Maria, and to impress her with

## Ca Musician

my eternal constancy; although I was aware that my constancy was of no consequence to her. By the time my equanimity was restored, I had been compelled to a new accession of passion for Maria, by her subtle feminine arts. Maria's finesse is wonderful, spectacular. I ordered more coffee in my most passionate mood. I drove with Maria in a dream of enchantment,—said the same things over and over to her in my most emotional tones; and now, to-night, I am good-natured, and Maria has dined with me before the concert,—ravenously,—like a peasant eating a dish of *hrách a kroupy*. She sat in a box with other aristocrats like herself, and we exchanged covert, good-humored smiles, and now she has provided me a theme for reflection,—not for a harmony, as once she did. Heaven! I dissolve at the memory of that achievement.



# *The Diary of*

February 26, 19—

ALEXEÏEVNA knows there is a fascination to me in observing how an aristocrat reduces herself to the semblance of a peasant, in certain of her moods. There are times when I listen to a raucous, shrewish quality of voice which she assumes, and know a fascination in watching her rapacity,—in observing certain evidences of a strange insensibility,—an absence of fastidious thought and feeling and decent action.

She knows how to become her suave, gracious, high-born self, at the very moment when interest is about to be merged in disgust.

Ah, Maria Alexeiëvna!



# Ca' Musician

February 27, 19—

SO far as friendships with women are concerned, I used to believe I had a catholic taste; but at that time I had never been in England.—At any rate, my taste is not *high church*.

March.

A LONELY message from my poor mother!

I shall see her at my earliest opportunity. I must stay out this exile, I suppose, until this engagement ends, then I get back to central Europe. If I cannot go to mother, I shall try to have her join me. I do not know that she would believe it possible.

Prague is about the limitation of her ability to assimilate modernity and civilization. I will think out some plan.

A letter from Josef. He is offered the baton here in London. I have written him as well as I could, of what he will have

## *The Diary of*

to survive if he accepts it. If any good friend had done this service for me, I am certain nothing would have induced me to come here. I want something to eat. I want to see a man weep and shout and wave his arms, and cover himself with confusion. I want to see a woman—no! I do not want to see an English woman under any conceivable circumstances.

However, these English have furnished to me a magnificent vocabulary with which to curse them. Their expletives are wonderful: satisfying alike to the soul and to the mind.

The human refrigerator is found in London in its perfectest estate.

March 9, 19—

**I** LONG to get away to the south country where God watches over people, and where Mammon doth not too much corrupt. I am tired of playing;—I love the music, but I am tired of playing. Y——

## *The Musician*

is a good fellow. He thinks I should go to America. Well, maybe—but not yet. If I cannot bear my life in England, what could I do in America? They would destroy me there. They tell me that everybody hurries, hurries, hurries. After all, it would be better there than here where no one hurries,—either for love or labor; but they tell me that in America they know nothing; and maybe even that would not be so bad; because here, I understand from an Englishman that these English know everything.

March 10, 19—

MARIA ALEXEIËVNA'S son is very ill. I am distracted. I saw the little child once in St. Petersburg; it was a sweet and gentle boy. He is but four years old. I have urged her to hasten to St. Petersburg, but she will not leave until to-morrow because of an engagement. I cannot sleep; I can think of nothing else.

## The Diary of

I myself have telegraphed for information. I cannot keep from my mind the picture of the little child fevered, dying perhaps, and longing for its mother. I believe its father is a very good sort of man; but I know little about him, save that his political acumen is respected by every one. Maria Korniloff must leave here. I shall go now, even at this late hour, and try to persuade her to leave in the morning.

March 11, 19—

**I** HAVE had a reply to my telegram to St. Petersburg. Maria Korniloff's child is desperately ill. It is diphtheria. I went post-haste to her to tell her the fearful nature of the disease, believing that she did not know. She knew, and she has refused to go. *She fears the disease!* She is not a woman—not even a woman;—she is a vulture! I am overwhelmed with horror. My God, can I never get that woman out of my arms! I would



## *Ca Musician*

shed my skin if I could get rid of the past with Maria Korniloff. The affair is not mine, but I cannot disassociate myself from it,—from the little child's suffering.

The mother has been too truly a part of my life, these past two years. If she would go to that child, I would abandon myself to the wretch. I can think of no abasement that would be greater, or of a thing more repugnant. If I could be of any use!—but that hope is absurd; I could do nothing for the child. I am an unknown quantity. It sat upon my knee for a moment. It has forgotten me, and in its illness might even fear me. All that care and science can do, is his; but he wants his mother. If I cannot make her go, I must throw up this engagement: I cannot play with this fearful sense of depression. The woman is a hyena.

I must do something.



# The Diary of

March 12, 19—

AM off for St. Petersburg. Y—— *knows* that I cannot play. He is a man of discretion and good feeling. He has facilitated my journey by every means. I cannot do anything; not even see the child. To ask to do so would be madness; and to expect that the presence of a stranger would serve the boy, is unintelligent; but I can remain in St. Petersburg until all is over.

The boy still lives. I have another message; but it does not comfort me. I am convinced he will not survive this illness. I shall stay till all is over. I shall have done what I could. I have closed accounts with the mother in London. Damn her, for the taste she must leave in my mouth all the rest of my days! I shall see the little child, and witness its sufferings in imagination, as long as I live.



# Ca Musician



March 16, 19—

**L**ITTLE Ivan Korniloff is dead and buried. I am off for my mother's house.

The past few days have been melancholy ones for me. The woman did not leave London until she received word that her boy was dead. She arrived in time for the funeral. I went to Nicholas Korniloff at the earliest opportunity. The man was in great grief. I learn that he and the child were very close,—as close as a busy life permitted.

I could speak but little. Beyond doubt he knows of my *affaire* with Maria Alex-

## *The Diary of*

eiëvna, and my presence in St. Petersburg must have meaning for him. There was a clasp of the hand, and a thought of hatred for the mother in the minds of both, I am sure.

He said: "Have you seen Maria Alexeiëvna?"

I answered: "She is in London."

"You are here," he said shortly, and grasped my hand.

I could not stay: I stifled. The little face betrayed much suffering. Thank God he is dead!

That children are born to such women as Maria Korniloff!

Oh, honest peasant-poor,—hard-working,—unselfish,—needing no learning to love her children, and to teach them love for her! To-night, I am all peasant. I am coming, mother, instantly.

# *Ca Musician*

March 17,  
Prague.

**I**T is good to be at home here, in Prague.

I cannot become used to mother in her new and strange setting, but it is mother as of old. Lonely mother! The past month has affected me more than I knew, while I was involved in its events. The scenes I have lately experienced, present themselves to my mind photographically, over and over. I doubt if I shall ever shake off this melancholy memory.

I should not delay here in Prague. It is but fair to Y—— that I hasten to Paris, where we are to meet. His demands are always in consonance with my ability to meet them, and he makes allowances for my limitations in a way hardly to be expected of a man of business. It pleases me to show my appreciation. However, I doubt if I should do either of us credit, if I were to play to-morrow night. Every night means five thousand francs, or

## The Diary of

nearly, besides the forfeit-money. No matter! I will consent to go to America the moment I meet him. I will hail him with the news. There, I will make it up to him. Good Y——! he has not pressed me, but America is his purpose, sleeping or waking. There is some Jewish impressario who will join us in Paris. He is from New York America. I fancy Y—— knows more about him than he has intimated. Very well! Let me wait at home with mother, another week, and I will smile upon your impressario from New York America.

March 19, 19—

MOTHER makes *hrách a kroupy* for me.

If Londoners could know that dish! I am at the Conservatory every day. I sit in the Ring-platz every day, and watch the figures of the clock as I used to in those first days of mine in Prague. I think frequently and gently of Ludmila. I

## *Ca Musician*

stand upon the Carl's Bridge. I used the telephone yesterday. I remember my first conversation, and repeated it. The chap said as before, "Very good, very good, very good"—I fancy he thinks the madman of four years ago has returned.

The old master at the Conservatory laughs with me at my phenomenal success. He, like myself, appreciates the humor of it. To-day he can teach me more than most virtuosi know.

I have been out to M——, and was surprised at the short distance; in fact, not farther off than half an hour. It seems incredible that a boy should have lived till his sixteenth year within a few miles of a city, and yet that city be to him a mystery.

Mother is lonely, and I know not what to do for her. It seems necessary that I continue to lead this wandering life. I have asked mother if she would be pleased

## *The Diary of*

to have me settle down beside her, till the time shall come when she no longer needs me. She hesitated,—I know well her hesitation was not for herself. She wants but little. She could always live in comfort if I never played again; but she knows of an avariciousness, and of plans of which I am supposed to know nothing. She does not wish to be happy at the expense of her other children. I am the goose who lays the golden egg for them. I am willing; but their pretensions seem absurd and unjustifiable to me. They are commonplace peasant folk; without genius, without substantial aspiration. I often wonder that they are the children of my—Bah!

I do not know why I run away thus when I contemplate family affairs, and find myself thinking upon that of which it would kill me to think.

Poor lonely mother!

The aspirations of my beloved brother



## Ca Musician

are so commonplace, that it would seem an easy thing to satisfy them. Good clothing,—not in the most fastidious taste,—and plenty of it; a fine house, and remarkable notions of comfort; a—oh stupid! I had rather remain near to mother. I lie with my head in her lap, and the little face of Ivan Korniloff rises before me as it lay in his coffin. I recall the hours of illness I knew as a little child.

Early memories, that might be a lifetime behind me so far as mental perspective goes, parade before me as I sit and think.

The two rooms in M——; the little entrance-passage half-way between them with its black, square, unventilated little box at the end, where mother made *hrách a kroupy* day after day, year after year; the two pails of water sitting by the side of the door; the mammoth beds in the living-room, where we ate and sat

## *The Diary of*

and worked and slept;—two beds that held us all! I recall my horrid nights, the final withdrawal to the storeroom where I might feel my misery of human contact and lack of privacy less!

There, with peas and beans; the smell of onions, dried fruits and the stuff of all kinds on which peasants like us live,—there, I found my only relief. There alone, I experienced a faint, half-sickly hope of something different; and I knew so little of life, that I did not even dream of what to hope. My horizon of hope was bounded by an individual pillow,—possibly a bed.

After all, it is best that I get away from here. Since I am to play for dear life, it matters little whether I return to it to-day or to-morrow.

In a few weeks I shall be twenty-one. Would that I had had time to dream of happiness; of something sweet to be sought; of something ideal to live for!

## *Ca Musician*

There was no time of transition for me as I now recall these years. Yesterday, absolute, abject poverty and ignorance, with the prejudices of my kind; to-day, money, fame, and whatever of excess there is to know. This last seems to be an adjunct of the other two,—money and fame.

Sometimes I am curious to know if my experience has been that of all. May I not have missed something? I can conceive of no love but parental and filial love. Josef is to marry. I listen to him talk of the woman. He sees in her a thousand excellencies. I have seen her. I saw a commonplace, rather plump, wide-eyed girl, who at the moment was engaged in sewing a rip in Josef's sleeve-lining;—likewise she told him that when he bought the coat he had been cheated.—Josef was transported with joy.

He will live under the same roof with her for the remainder of his life;—at any

## *The Diary of*

rate that seems to be his intention now, and I fancy he will do so. She is no more calculated to drive a man away, than to keep him near to her. There seem to be some emotions that I have missed, and yet my experience has been wider, more complete than Josef's.

It need not have been; but those things which brought upon me a palsy, a delirium of excitement, Josef laughed at or went to sleep over; and yet he is more rugged than I. I am slight, small, sinewy. Josef six feet, broad, brawny, and joyous. I do not know that I have ever been joyous. I have been consumed with a fever of ecstasy,—I have been translated by emotion,—I have lived life to death! There is a difference between Josef and myself.

Josef has found women admirable. I do not know that women have impressed me more favorably than did the mill-girl;—whom, by the way, I stopped to speak with while I was at M——. She

## Ca Musician

ran as fast as one hundred and eighty pounds permitted.

I must go to Paris.

I encountered the great *statkář* of my infant veneration, and I smiled in spite of myself. He is a man of penetration, as well as of some modest and justifiable pretension. He knew intuitively why I smiled. He told me that he had wished to hear me play, but that his rheumatism and various disabilities prevented him from journeying. It delighted me to play for him in that wonderful house where, in my childhood, I was told that a bed existed for each member of his family. I surprised myself looking about for these fabulous beds, and I related to him that story of my childhood, and its origin in my early distemper. It pleased the good man immensely, and we went to look at the beds. I shall recall that night spent in his company and at his house with pleasure, always.

# *The Diary of*

I doubt if I shall ever return to M——; I do not mean to do so. I should not have gone upon this occasion.

March 24, 19—

**I** LEAVE for Paris to-morrow. Y—— has written me a letter to which I should respond at once. I shall do so.

Paris, April 3, 19—

**I** CONTINUE my season after the 6th, in the south. I have cleared the way for my leap into the boundless ignorance of America, into its discomfort and madness. I already regret it; but I have pleased Y——, and that should please me. I will be frank, and say that I like my manager.

This is Philistine, but it cannot be helped. He was born with an inside. He recognizes that other men are born to this condition and he makes allowances for them,—even for the inside of a musician. When I recall the wretch H——,

# *Ca Musician*

I go insane. However, he was not entirely a happy man.

We leave this world for the new, sometime in the fall. I do not hate those people over there; I am largely indifferent to them, I fancy; but I hope they will make up to us this broken time and broken contract. Our forfeiture was immense for the London time, and we feel poor.

The impresario from the New York America was a remarkably cold managerial essence. He could scarce be called a man because of his extreme emaciation. Y—— and I refer to him as the Essence. He is one thing that most of these men who play are not,—a lover of music; the real, the divine lover of music. I almost lost count while we talked, and conceived the idea that I was to be engaged in a sort of private, orchestral accompaniment to his daily disagreeable task of managing theatre people. I understand that such has hitherto been his business in life. In

## *The Diary of*

the course of time I awoke, but it was a pleasant dream, and I frequently enjoyed this illusion when we talked of business. I rather liked him, and the man loves music.

April 9, Toulouse.

THE New York America proposition is certainly a masterly one on the part of Y——. He of course accompanies me. Our own rewards seem prodigious, even in the light of past experience.

I do not understand where the impresario is to make his profit; but Y—— assures me that I need not distress myself.

The season here is stale, flat, and profitable, and I suppose I should be satisfied. I am able frequently to go into the country for hours together. It is exceedingly pleasant. The French have always pleased me.

Down here, there are women who are pleasing to look at, and if a man does not press the question too closely and thus



## *Ca Musician*

confuse them, he may find them comparatively virtuous.

There is a little child in the hotel who remains with me for hours. I find much pleasure in having him near to me. There are moments when I have felt a strange glow of the heart, and have opened my arms to him involuntarily; it is an impulse that I cannot control. It is a sort of rapture that I feel. I love the soft little hands upon my neck, when he throws his arms about me.

I should love to nurse the little fellow if he were ill,—if I could endure the sight of his suffering. A thought of Maria Korniloff's child rushes upon me. I have a prescience that I shall one day meet Maria Korniloff again, and that we shall know a memorable moment. It is Fate. I am not done with her.

It would be strange if we did not meet again. She is everywhere but where she belongs, and I wander eternally. I trust

## *The Diary of*

when that time shall come, I may be self-controlled. She affects me on the wolf side: It is the cat in her.

May 23, 19—

**S**AVOY again. As good a place to die in as any other!

I am not at all sure why we are in London again,—unless it be that I am growing excessively good-natured.

Y—— is a marvelous man,—I am forced to confess it. He urges nothing. In short, he insists so upon my comfort, that I am in a fever of impatience to accommodate him to any extent.

Josef is to be married. I shall be present. I long to witness his marriage. It will be next month. I shall then be playing in L——, and shall go to K——, between a Saturday and a Monday, for the purpose. He has taken that infernal contract in this infernal place. My God! Josef likes London. If he were not in-

## *Ca Musician*

evitably truthful, I should believe him to be lying. However, he loses no flesh. I have lost flesh on this occasion, as I did when I came here in February. It is not alone the lack of something to eat, but the place and the English get upon one's nerves.

I wonder what impression music conveys to them, when they think that they like it?

If I were drowning I should expect to be saved, if an Englishman were at hand; but I had rather be permitted to die enthusiastically by my kind.

The English have no folk-songs that I know of. A country without folk-songs is an abandoned country. This country's memories are recorded good and hard, in solid rock or bronze, or in something else as imperishable. There is nothing elastic about their souls or their history,—consequently nothing picturesque. They have crossed all their emotional T's, and have

## *The Diary of*

dotted their devotional I's, and an Englishman is a sadly happy man,—full to the top with a lugubrious joy,—and he likes to unveil monuments despondently.

London, May 29, '19—

**W**HAT is a man to do in this London?

London, June 1, 19—

**I** AM continually amazed at the constant, kind feeling of Y——. I asked him yesterday why he conducted himself so like a human being, and so little like a manager.

His reply proved him to be a man of intelligence as well as of humane feeling. He tells me that more is to be got out of genius, by taking into consideration those moods and intenses which are likely to be a part of it. I fancy he pities us,—probably has no very large respect for us. I have little for my own inability to pursue an even course, under any and

## *Ca Musician*

all circumstances. It is not my spirit that fails me, but my flesh. When Maria Korniloff's child died, I would have continued my engagement here had it been possible; but if I had attempted to do so I should have ruined us. Both my art and my body would have succumbed to the outrage upon my soul. This possession of a genius-faculty, makes of a man the most imperfect of creatures. To be a genius is to be but half a man.

I should like to be Josef,—a man from top to toe;—a good round talent which is as much to be depended on as the sun;—more so, because there are no cloudy days for Josef. And then, he is in love. To be in love as Josef Jaroslav is, appears to me a matter of inconsequence; but he is entirely comfortable, which is better than to be consequential.

They will be married in London, quite contrary to their original plan. I am pleased: I shall be able to observe some

## The Diary of

of the details of this comfortable passion. If I thought this married love pleasing, why then I should marry. I suppose it is a thing with which a man might experiment.

*Sláva!* It will be something to do in this London. I will set up a *ménage* as nearly like Josef's as possible. I will go at once to Josef. I will consult him. Perhaps he can advise me. If I like it, I can make the arrangement permanent.

June 3, 19—

I HAVE lost no time, but have settled myself in quarters here, as nearly as possible like those Josef has chosen for his Anna. She is German—is Josef's Anna. Likewise I have found an Anna—her name is Marion, and she is English. I am brimful of the possibilities of it. Marion is a trifle taller than Anna, and less broad, but the dupli-

## *Our Musician*

cate is as near as England seemed to furnish.

Anna has more bone, I fancy; however Marion has a fresh clear complexion, and is quiet and industrious.

We have a sort of living-place at Kensington. I have boarded my servant at the Savoy—putting him in my apartments until I become certain of the success of my experiment. At first I would have discharged Karel, but Y——'s wisdom prevailed. He has expressed no unfaith in the satisfaction I am to experience from the arrangement, or in its permanency; but he says it will be time to dispense with Karel later.

Doubtless Y—— is right. I believe in him.

We have no servant. Josef and Anna will have none. Josef expected to have one, but Anna said it was extravagant. Hence Marion and I have no servant. Marion's father is a minister, and lives

## *The Diary of*

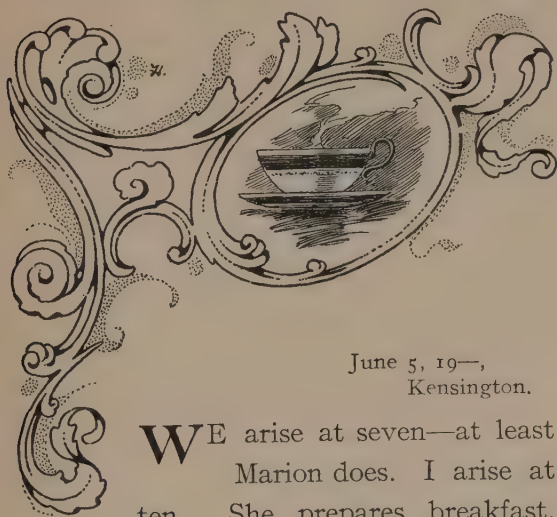
in a place called Bristol—same name as the hotel in Vienna.

Marion seems to have an adequate education. I am not qualified to judge—I myself having so little. She is extremely patient. I forget how I first met her—I believe it was the first time I came to England, when I played in the provinces at some provincial home. I do not know, but that seems likely. She is refined, and scrupulously neat. I do not think she is accustomed to domestic work. I bought furniture for the house. It appears to me very amusing as a way of living. It is really like the place where Josef and Anna will live, thus my experiment should be successful. I have explained my wishes to Marion, and she smiled in entire approval, and seemed to enjoy the situation.

If I like it, I shall suggest that we make the conditions permanent after a time,—and then I shall not go to America. I give Y—— my money, and stay at home.



# *The Musician*



June 5, 19—,  
Kensington.

**W**E arise at seven—at least Marion does. I arise at ten. She prepares breakfast. I do not like it. Perhaps I shall learn to. She cannot make coffee. That, however, is too puerile a reason for which to abandon my purpose: for which to “break up house-keeping”,—that which we are doing is called that in English: “Housekeeping”.

It is very pleasant to drop out of the world thus. My address is unknown, and I return here instantly after the concert. I find Marion here awaiting me, and with

# *The Diary of*

something to eat prepared. She says that it is extravagance to have wine; therefore we drink TEA; that is as it should be: she is following in Anna's footsteps as nearly as possible, and Anna has lived in England a long time.

The fault is not Marion's; but, mother of God! this TEA which we drink for breakfast, luncheon and dinner, and again for supper is terrific.

I admire the precise manner in which she is endeavoring to apply my ideas. Let me be just.

June 7, 19—

**I** CANNOT refrain from studying Marion. I do not think that Josef has ever given much thought to Anna's personality; but try as I will, I cannot escape these thoughts. I think I am never in her presence, that I do not see in the foreground an enormous ankle.

I have mentioned this to Josef. Josef

## *The Musician*

said: "Well, man, must not a woman have a good stout ankle, and a generous foot, if she is to fetch and carry for us, and thus make herself happy?" He added: "Anna's ankles are as big round as my arm. I love her dear ankles so much, I should blow out my brains were they a shade less."

Oh, good Heaven! I shall try to acquire this mental attitude.

June 15, 19—

**WE** are going to leave for France next week, and I am glad. I could not have pushed the experiment farther without something to sustain me. Change will do it. I refuse to abandon the situation so soon.

I am not comfortable with this Marion: she is too alert for my comfort. As a matter of fact, when I had given the matter up in despair, she brought me the most delicious cup of coffee man ever

## The Diary of

drank. I could but throw my arms about her, since I cannot speak the infernal tongue. A strange transfiguration seemed to take place on the instant, and I have not been comfortable since. Unconsciously, I have found myself trying to please her. She is by no means so fresh-colored and English as at first. She almost pleases me.

Y—— is delighted. I have told him that if I find myself pleased, I shall not go to New York America. He was very pleasant about it, and refused to be overwhelmed with anxiety.

Y—— dines frequently with us, and so does Josef. I believe I shall make the affair permanent, if France brightens me up. I mentioned this to her, and she seemed not displeased; she has a most pleasant smile. She has suggested certain changes in our *ménage* which she says are not entirely incompatible with domesticity, although they may not be

## *Ca Musician*

exactly what Josef and Anna have planned.

I have found the changes pleasant. I take her to France with me: Josef would take his Anna under similar circumstances.

June 19, 19—,  
France.

**I** AM not to remain here long enough to rent a house,—hence am living in an hotel. I confess that I do not like Marion so well in France as in London: she is not in the picture of my thoughts.

I have suggested that she return to London. For a moment, her face wore an incomprehensible expression; but she agreed with me that it might be wiser.

I do not believe that I should care to make the conditions permanent. I have told Y—— that I will go to America;—he did not seem to be surprised.

I shall make her a magnificent present; she is a gentlewoman, I think. I do not know much of the status of ministers of

## *The Diary of*

God in England, or what constitutes gentle birth (a great society actress of England had a minister father) or what is the outward symbol of refinement in English women: all is so different in that country; but I feel instinctively that could I speak their language—the more elegant end of it—and understand all the light and shade of conversation and of tone, I should discover Marion to be of refined and gentle birth.

However that may be, I am exceedingly grateful to her. She has given me some interest in life, while forced to remain in that country.

I do not think I have succeeded in experiencing what Josef expects to experience; but perhaps I could not. Certainly I have duplicated his conditions with the utmost conscientiousness.

I shall place to Marion's credit, twenty-five hundred pounds;—with the understanding that I am always delighted to

# *Ca Musician*

serve her further, if she chooses to call upon me. I trust this will express to her something of my appreciation. I do not forget the coffee; I do not forget—many things.

June 25, 19—

**I** AM distracted. Who would have believed that an honest purpose would so have plunged me into despair! I proposed two days ago, that Marion return to London. For two days I did not dream of anything in the nature of complication. Complications seemed absurd: the situation did not warrant them. The day before her intended departure, she threw herself into my arms in an agony of hysterical grief, and entreated to remain with me.

I am in collapse. It was as lightning from a clear sky. The thought of Marion forever beside me,—as Anna will be beside Josef!—It is intolerable. Who could have dreamed that she would experience

## The Diary of

what Anna and Josef experience? I had no thought of that. I have reminded her that our separation was anticipated from the beginning. All of this she admits, but she tells me that, without her volition, her heart has become involved in our house-keeping;—damned English word! I fear the situation will embitter her days, consequently mine, forever more. I *could* not send her away. I told her to remain, but her grief did not abate, and I could not bear to witness it. She has now controlled herself somewhat, but her suffering is evident through her smiles.

I think my heart will break. That a creature should love one to whom response is impossible, is the bitterest fate. I would willingly assume what I do not feel, but she has already anticipated that. She tells me that she will go later. I have implored her to remain. She has a gentle heart;—I could not live and know that I had wounded it; but she knows that I



## *Ca Musician*

feel none of that emotion to which Josef is subject. I had sent for Karel to come from the Savoy; but I have now had Y—— telegraph him to remain there, till I depart for America New York; I cannot tell what may happen.

I am distracted at the unintentional harm I have done this kind girl. England be damned!

August,  
France.

**I** HAVE had no heart to write here in many weeks. I find relief in nothing but application to my work.

Marion and I rove about wherever my engagements call me. Karel is still in London, at the Savoy, in my old apartments. Josef has married his Anna. Curse Anna! If it had not been for Anna I had not been in this inextricable situation.

This poor girl hardly speaks,—nor do I in her presence. I believe that we are both appalled at each other's misery, and

## *The Diary of*

at our inability to find a way out. Marion loves me;—I do not love her;—neither is at fault. I make no criticism of her; she makes none of me. It is horrible, horrible. There are moments of internal strife and rebellion at the pervading conditions, when I should like to choke her; then instantly I am consumed with remorse, and am impelled to fall at her feet.

Sometimes, I think that if she did not put her hand to the pins in her hair, with a trick of gesture that is hers, I should dislike her less.

While I cannot see what this has to do with the real issue, yet it has its place in the sum of my miseries. It would be absurd to speak of such a thing. I shall never see a light-colored shell pin for a woman's hair, without a revulsion of soul. Marion has a way of stretching out her hand and arm, and settling her glove more firmly after she has inserted her thumb, that distracts me.

# *Ca Musician*

There are moments when I feel that I must cut my throat. It must end before long. I have lost what little flesh is natural to me. No more London.

My panic is, lest Marion should learn of my petty prejudices.

August 6, 19—

I HAVE placed the money to her credit, and when I explained the matter to her she resented it. Y—— made her understand that if she adhered to her intention of rejecting the money, she would drive me insane: money is all that I can give her. She took it. I know that, in order to relieve my own distracted feelings, I have again caused her distress.

That it should have been my fate to select the exceptional woman in all the world,—the only woman, in all probability, who might have experienced a serious emotion for me!—it is maddening.

I cannot think what is to be done when

## *The Diary of*

I must leave for New York America. I shall send for Karel again, no matter what opposition I meet with. I cannot bear that this woman should fetch and carry for me. It sickens me. Again I must indulge my own prejudices at the expense of her happiness; but if I do not permit myself to exercise my will in small matters, I shall not be able to stay near her;—and after all, that is the one thing that I must do.

August 9, 19—

**T**HAT I should have chosen for an experiment the only woman in the world capable of affection! Affection!—that word which signifies that which is so much more abiding than love. Oh, it sickens me!

August 15, 19—

**I** SECRETED Marion's shell pin; it was to no purpose. She abstractedly fingers the little tin pins in her hair, as if the shell pin were present.

# *Our Musician*

August 16, 19—

**M**ARION has purchased a new shell pin. Oh, God!

August 17, 19—

**M**ARION has some blue stockings. If there is anything in this world that maddens me, it is hosiery of another color than black.

Heaven help me! my intentions are good.

August 22, 19—

**L**AST night I wept in my sleep, and Marion came in to awaken me. I dreamed that I was with mother, and was a boy again.

I am sure it has depressed her: she has been very kindly, but has spoken little to-day.

August 23, 19—

**K**AREL has arrived, and he looks fat and sleek. Marion wept for the first time since the day I proposed her return to England. Thank Heaven I need

## *The Diary of*

not see her any more doing a servant's work for me! It has distracted me, ever since I learned that she cared for me.

August 24, 19—

**I** HAVE begged Marion to marry me. She has refused. Oh my God! *Is* there anything more that I can do?

August 26, 19—

**M**ARION is so still, that I admire her in spite of myself.

August 27, 19—

**C**OULD I but love this girl as I admire her!

August 28, 19—

**I** DID not dream that such a woman as this existed.

August 29, 19—

**W**HAT is it we love? Not virtue; not dignity; not love itself.



# *As a Musician*

August 30, 19—

**Y**ESTERDAY was Sunday, and we went into the country. I was cheered because Marion seemed happy. Strange! she does not like music. I was playing Schumann last night after returning from the concert, and Marion remarked that she “always liked Beethoven”,—as nearly as I could understand her. There is something so remarkable to me in these incongruities, that I cannot express their effect upon me.

It depresses me greatly.—It is the total lack of sympathy between us. There is nothing between us but love on her part. I cannot imagine a life of love that would long be tolerable without something more;—a mutual knowledge of some one thing, a mutual like or dislike,—a—a something that does not exist for us. I sit and marvel: should not love have made her instinctively sympathetic?

On the other hand,—if I had loved her,

## *The Diary of*

would I not have been in a receptive mood? It is hopeless, hopeless. What is to be done? What?—when I go to New York America?

September 5, 19—

**M**ARION awaits my return each night. This is almost more than I can bear. She demands nothing; yet, to save my soul, I could not be unfaithful to her while she dwells with me. Oh, she maddens me!

September 6, 19—

**I** BELIEVE I am going to be ill.

September 8, 19—

**I** AM playing badly. While I am in the midst of a number, I am like as not to forget what I am doing; and last night I prolonged a note so indefinitely, that Y—— hissed at me from without. I must do better than this.



# *Ca Musician*

September 11, 19—

**A**NNA! Anna! Anna! Josef writes  
each week—of nothing but his Anna.  
I shall have a grudge against her for the  
remainder of my life.

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# The Diary of



September 13, 19—

**M**ARION has gone. I have no conception of her whereabouts, and I am distracted with a sense of apprehension. I fear—I know not what. She left a note for me; a calm, reassuring note, telling me simply that it was time for her to go;—that she had meant to go from the first. She has written that she believes it better thus, for both. She has urged me not to reproach myself; reminding me that I placed myself under no obligation concerning the future, when we met in London in the spring. This should elate me. I should be able to throw off my melan-

# *Our Musician*

choly, and rise on the wings of hope.  
Perhaps I may to-morrow.

September 14, 19—

**I** AM oppressed.

September 15, 19—

**I** HAVE tried to learn something of her whereabouts, but cannot seem to find her. I have written to Josef, giving him instructions to find her in London, where I suppose she has gone; and to serve her in my name if possible. I have written him a letter to give to her if he can find her. I should try to get her back; it is right that I should. She truly loves me. Her quiet departure reveals to me that of the English character which I did not dream belonged to man or woman of any country. She has conducted herself with indescribable dignity; I wonder if this is exceptional conduct among her people, or if it be characteristic.

# The Diary of

I am too troubled to eat or sleep, or to attend to my business as I ought. Y—— is exceedingly kind. I will certainly continue to play, if only in his interests.

September 17, 19—

**N**O news of any kind. I must go to London if possible. I am trying to plan for it between engagement and engagement. I do not see my way. Y—— has communicated with a detective agency in Paris, and one in London, for me. He is doing the best he can. So must I.

September 19, 19—

**I**F only I might hear that she is married or — *anything* — I know not what! anything but thinking of me! To have wounded a heart as I fear I have wounded hers, is torture to me. I would like to go to Prague. I would like to talk with my mother;—my mother,—who would be amazed to know of such conditions! Per-

## *The Musician*

haps her very simplicity would help me; though, to speak the truth, even I did not know there were such complications in life, till now. It would not have been possible to any other woman whom I have known. Imagine Maria Alexeiévna losing flesh, or failing to enjoy a good dinner or rare wine, because of some absorbing passion!

I have not thought of Maria Alexeiévna for months. The memory is as a black cloud, coming between me and the light of the soul. I wonder under what circumstances I shall see her next?

Shall I ever get word of Marion? Shall I ever get my world to rights again? I am confused with the situation. I am not made to endure complicated emotions. I seem beset with distractions.—My brother wants money.—I have sent it. To the devil with them! My brothers and sisters bore me.

# *The Diary of*

September 20, 19—

**M**ARION is dead in Paris.—She killed herself.—I am going.

September 29, 19—

**H**ORRIBLE! horrible! Y—— tells me that he will hasten my departure for America. The fearful events of the past week have destroyed me. She killed herself, she killed herself. She went alone, where no one knew her. She called herself by another name, and did not mean that I should ever know. I should never have known, had it not been for my extraordinary efforts to find her through the police. She killed herself. She was unidentified, she killed herself; poisoned herself.—Went to sleep and never woke. Horrible! Shall I ever get away from this accursed country?

Josef came over. Y—— is with me. What shall I do? What shall I do? I found that shell pin among my effects

# *Ed Musician*

last night. I fainted. I would have married her. I would have been kind. I would have been constant.

I am done with women for the remainder of my life. I am amazed that I have lived through this. I hardly know myself.

October,  
Dresden.

I am keeping my engagements.

October 4, 19—

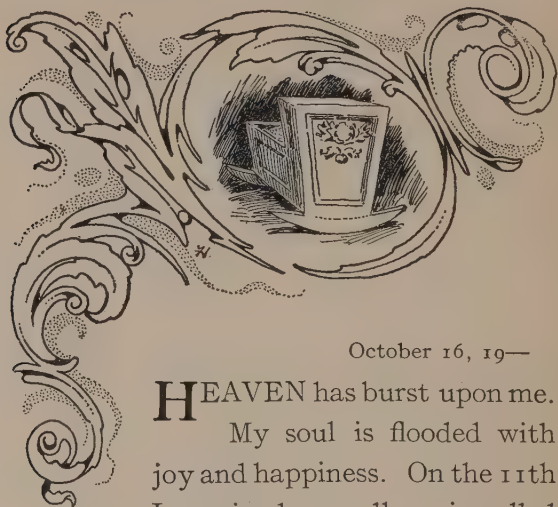
**WE** go to New York America next month. I am glad.

October 9, 19—

I like Y——.



# The Diary of



October 16, 19—

**H**EAVEN has burst upon me.

My soul is flooded with joy and happiness. On the 11th I received a sadly misspelled and obscure note, bearing no date or address. I opened it mechanically, and in doing so destroyed the postmark. That postmark would have saved me a world of trouble, and have enabled me to approach my happiness five hours sooner. In all my life I have never known such perfect happiness as these few, strangely scrawled words have brought to me.

“Monsieur X——, will you come and



## *Ca Musician*

see your daughter? I do not know if this will reach you. I shall take good care of her." Signed, "Elise Benoit." Addressed "Monsieur X——, Europe."

My daughter, my daughter! I was just leaving the opera house. Y—— thought that trouble had impaired my mind. I showed him the letter: I did not know if I had read it aright. It was true. I returned to my hotel, and began immediately to pack. Y—— did not remonstrate. He is a good, sensible man. He sighed and assisted me. He proposed to look up trains, etc., and for the first time I became aware that I did not know my place of destination. He recommended me to look at the postmark, but the envelope had been lost at the opera house. Y—— enjoined me to think, to recall the name. I could not. I could not recollect any Elise Benoit,—besides, as I reminded him, my daughter might not be her daughter; "Elise Be-

## The Diary of

noit" might be some benevolent woman in charge of it; but in turn he assured me that it would at least locate the child, if not the mother, if I could recall the woman.

I was in despair. At last, Y—— reminded me that I was in the town of Mons before the February engagement in London. *Sláva!*—and so I was! It was near enough. I started for Mons. I did not sleep. I did not eat. I knew not how long the letter might have been on its way. My hands trembled with joy. My eyes were constantly filled with tears. Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone! If the letter had said a son, I think I must have lost my few wits; however there were advantages in a daughter. She would need the more devotion, the tenderer care.

Oh, I flew, I laughed, I felt that I must shout my fortune from the house-tops; and now I am here in Mons. I shall keep my word to Y——, and return in time to

## *Ca Musician*

sail on the 23d. Y—— appeared to me to be worn,—not well.

In the meantime, what happiness is mine! The writer of the note was the mother of the child. A French girl, gentle, and devoted if I mistake not. I must make no mistake about this or about her entire responsibility, before I leave here. I wrote at once to Y——, entreating him to take the child with us; but he has besought me not to; and he wisely enough says that it would endanger the welfare of so young a child. She is a month old, but does not even know me. I should have known her for mine the world over, I am certain. The mother is strong and healthy and cheerful; is a young peasant, and loves her child by night and by day. She overflowed with delight when I arrived. To save my life I cannot recall her, but I would not wound her by telling her so. I inquired in the town for news of all newly born

## *The Diary of*

children—girls—within a radius of twenty miles. The name Benoit was not known, save in her immediate locality,—without the environs of the town.

She lived in a little house, mean in its exterior, but very clean withal. I could see nothing about the place to harm my child. I must arrange something. I am so dazed with this joy coming to me in the midst of my trouble and desolation, that I have hardly been able to act methodically. My New York America tour takes on a new meaning for me. I have been playing for months in a perfunctory manner. My present enthusiasm has never been equalled. I shall return a rich man. I am distracted when I think of going so far away, yet the thought of the money compensates me.

Thank God the note was not too well written, and perfumed not at all, and bore none of the marks of elegance and of the world! Thank God she was a

## Ca Musician

little, homely, kindly, peasant girl with singleness of thought and devotedness of heart. I believe she will care for my daughter well. I have suggested many things for her happiness. I have tried to find if she has a preference for some other life than the one she knows. I confess I asked with hesitation, but I would have indulged her desires as best I could. Fortunately she has none. She is delighted to have me near. The people about her are people of a peculiar virtue: and they did not treat her over-well. Her aunt has kept her since she could not work. The thought that she has not found life quite easy, troubles me. But I shall repay her a thousand-fold. I think it would be well for the child if Elise should learn to read and write. It must be so, because I can have no peace if I may not be certain of news from them almost daily.

I have been to the *curé*, who appears

## *The Diary of*

to be an intelligent man. He agrees that Elise shall be taught. I do not wish her to do hard work.

I find it was her custom to work in the fields. I had rather she did not. Let her learn to read and to write and to care for my daughter with an intelligence to match her motherly affection, and I shall ask no more. Whatever she asks of me, I shall try to grant.

She desired to be left where she was until I returned,—which must be in the spring. I cannot consent to that, but have made the change as inconsequent to her as possible. It was best that she have a warmer house, and more room, and some assistance. Her old aunt can live with her. I have rented a house nearer the town, and have installed them there. There is a tiny room for the little child to be bathed in, away from the draughts. I have counseled her to bathe it each day. She hesitates, since it seems

## *Ca Musician*

not to be the custom; however, I think well of it, and it shall be done. Then there is a room, large and well ventilated, and other rooms below. She is as amazed as a little child to find herself possessed of this commonplace comfort. I do not think it will endanger her simplicity, and I have much faith in her good sense and in her responsibility, as I continue to observe her.

I feel completely satisfied with my life. I have been to the physician in the town, and have placed the physical welfare of these two in his hands. I have been to the convent near by and solicited the services of the nuns. They will see that Elise and the child are supplied with all proper clothing till Elise better understands her own case. I can think of nothing I have left undone. When shall I ever again know the perfect happiness that I have experienced in adjusting these details? How can I go to New York

# *The Diary of*

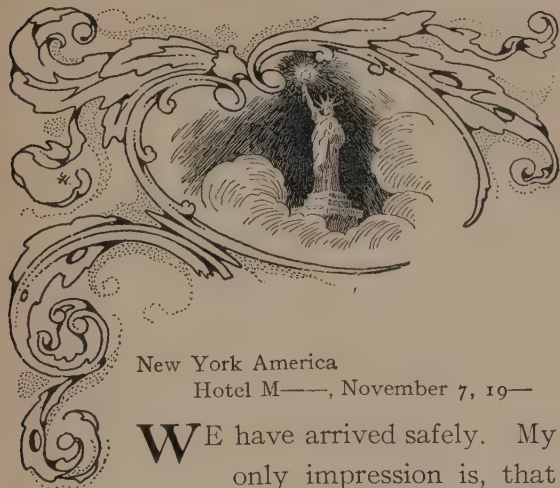
America?—by remembering that my daughter will be a rich woman when it shall please her to be!

I am coming, Y——. I am coming. I shall conduct myself in a manner to make life less of a burden to you. I am about to become an angel.





# *A Musician*



New York America

Hotel M——, November 7, 19—

**W**E have arrived safely. My only impression is, that I shall never cross a thoroughfare in this place, on foot. The traffic is no more congested than elsewhere, but in Marion's country there are provisions for safety that do not exist here. The dead Marion redeemed her country in my thought. I think of her with a world of gentleness and gratitude.

I play here to-night. The accompanist was engaged on this side of the world. Excellent! This essence of an

## *The Diary of*

impresario I like extremely. I still have the impression that I have been engaged to play in New York America for his individual happiness. He is an artistic man.

I play in the hall of a Scotchman who owns a fabulous number of books, and must build libraries in every quarter of the earth to put them in. That is all that I have learned of New York America.

I have as yet no word from Mons. I am impatient to hear.

November 8, 19—,  
Hotel M—.

**P**LAYED last night. I had been told of the enthusiasm of the Americans, but not of their delirium. I am dismayed. I am assured that nothing worse than what I have passed through, is likely to occur; but of that I by no means feel certain.

I played with an impression that only a

## *Ca Musician*

few in the house knew, while the remainder did not care what I was doing.

Already I am overwhelmed with letters from all sorts of people. Last night the women ran down to the front. At first I thought the house attacked with epilepsy. I could only stand and look at their queer antics, as those human waves undulated before me. I used to help my father buy cattle by live weight, standing in their enclosures. Unconsciously I began to lump together all those naked fore-shoulders before me and to calculate their value as they stood. I lost myself in the thought, and laughed. Then they clasped their hands, or waved them, and reached up onto the stage. I felt as if their arms were the feelers of the devil-fish that I used to be told of in my childhood, and I backed out of reach.

It was wonderful.

I felt the blood rush over my face: my shame for these strange women was almost

## *The Diary of*

suffocating. I am assured that this is but an evidence of their approval. There is but one way to interpret this remarkable exhibition: this city must possess the largest number of unmarried and virtuous females, of any place in the world. I did not know that such virgin minds could exist. I do not think I shall particularly like the country; however, I am not concerned about it one way or the other. I am greatly interested to make a large amount of money; and I am assured that I shall do this. Now that I have arrived here, my guarantee is not enough. My ideas seem to have expanded upon entering the country. I shall expect the first letter from Mons by to-morrow's steamer.

I encountered Maria Alexeiëvna the day before I sailed. The meeting impressed me, but this is the first mood in which I have been able to write of it. It was in the corridor of the Hotel Frascati, where I remained the night before we

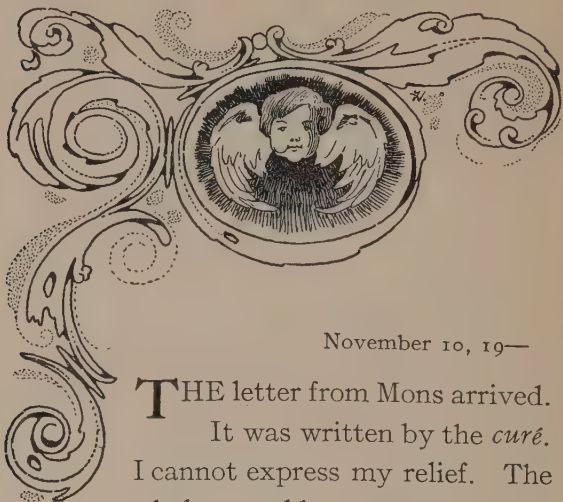
## *Ca Musician*

sailed. I came upon her like a ghost, as I was going to my room after midnight. Y—— was with me, and I cannot imagine where she was going or where she had come from; but when I saw her, the whole world grew bloody before me, and without an instant's thought I sprang at her. Y—— rushed to her assistance, and perhaps it was as well; because when I felt her throat between my fingers, I meant to kill her.

I felt like a man struggling with nightmare, and the little face of Ivan Korniloff was before me, and then the tiny face in Mons. I wanted to strangle her in the interests of humanity.

Y—— doubtless acted discreetly, but he wrenched my bow arm so badly that I have had to go with it bandaged ever since, and it came near handicapping me on my opening here. However, it is quite right now.

# The Diary of



November 10, 19—

THE letter from Mons arrived. It was written by the *curé*. I cannot express my relief. The whole world seems to have changed for me since that October night when I received the letter from Elise Benoit. During my stay in Mons I held the little child in my arms almost continually, and at night its mother frequently permitted it to lie beside me. It is a beautiful memory that will follow me all of my days. The *curé* writes me that all is well with them. He writes that Elise wishes him to keep me informed of

## *Our Musician*

her welfare and the child's, and that she does not wish to write until the spring.

I fancy there is an innocent secret behind this. I smile as I think of it. I fancy Elise means to learn to write, in earnest. This pleases me: it is an exhibition of conscience.

These American people are most sociable. I would be pleased to know something of them, but I think it better not. If their conduct at the concerts is beyond their control, it would be madness to trust oneself in their homes.

They are in no sense like the English—Somewhat French.—But French enthusiasm cannot be equalled by American nervousness. I spoke with the handsome chambermaid when she came to look after the room to-day, and although I could not understand the language, I instantly understood her meaning. There was a certain positive, temperamental intelligence that spoke from her eyes and gen-

# *The Diary of*

eral expression, that was most inspiring; and doubtless the best people are mentally superior to this chambermaid—if less well behaved.

My rooms are full of flowers, many of them bearing women's cards. If their nerves must find expression, this flowery expression is certainly a pretty and acceptable way. From earthquakes to roses,—they make me wink! I suppress an inclination to dodge, each time they loose themselves in the hall after I have played.

There is a bitter moment ahead of me, I fear. At one point, my engagements conflict with P——'s. We play in the same town, in the western part of the country, sometime after the holidays. Under usual circumstances this should have no especial meaning,—a great pianoplayer and a violinist! But in this case the challenge lies in our respective personalities. I admire P—— and his genius with an unbounded admiration; and if it



## Ca Musician

were not for the conditions in Mons, I doubt if I would give the *contretemps* a thought. As it is, I can afford no unfavorable comparisons,—nothing that can possibly lessen my own value as an exhibition.

I shall direct Y——'s attention to this, and perhaps he can devise some advertising method which will offset the danger to me, and even turn the situation to account. I dare say he can.

The challenge will not be artistic, but personal. P—— has had many seasons of excessive worship from these Americans. One half his success is due to his personality. My personality is accountable for *two thirds* of my success. Both his art and himself deserve all that he has got from them,—but so do mine. It seems to me that it is not possible for one city, no matter how vast, to furnish one of my audiences and one of his on the same night. In consequence of

## *The Diary of*

this, one of us must lose prestige. I certainly do not mean that it shall be I.

December 2, 19—

THE season is magnificently successful.

I get only the best of news from Mons. Heaven, should I ever hear of the child's illness! I have spoken to Y—— about the western engagement. He had already foreseen the situation, and has suggested to me several means of turning it to account. I do not think any of them very good.

December 19—

Y—— has suggested that I marry on my return to Europe.

I do not know about this. He believes that I will need some new reason for exhibiting myself, if I am to return here next year.

I am impressed anew that this is a remarkable people.

## *Ca Musician*

It will not be enough that I play: my genius is of secondary consideration. I must present to them new food for thought. Their power of assimilation and craving for more, is beyond one's wildest European conception. I am sure it is no especial importance to me, if Y—— sees any profit in it; only that I do not know whom I should marry. I dare say Y—— would be able to adjust that. I have suggested, however, that he withhold the enterprise till pushed to the extreme.

February.

**I** AM to play in this western city at last, with P—— as a rival.

My apprehensions were correct. Something must be done. Thus far he has the best of it. On the one hand, I have still to satisfy public curiosity; on the other, P—— already has a reputation to sustain him. While it should be a fairly even thing, yet it is not.

## *The Diary of*

I am determined that nothing shall interfere with my profits.

Y—— thinks it an excellent plan to announce my engagement just before I return to Europe. I think it premature. Besides, we should be able to follow it up with some specific statement as to the woman; and I am by no means certain whom we had best select. At first it occurred to me that almost any one would serve, and upon this hypothesis I made a list for Y——. He says, however, that because of American prejudices, she must be of] the aristocracy;—therefore I made up a new list. But this complicates the matter somewhat, because I am prejudiced against those women. Y—— reminded me that our present purpose is entirely one of enterprise, and that is true; but my thought reverted to Josef and Anna,—and to the dead Marion; God rest her! God forgive me!—though I meant no harm!

## *Ca Musician*

I think I shall let Y—— manage the matter as best pleases him,—only nothing must interfere with my immediate departure for Mons, upon my return in the spring. I have given him to understand this, and he will remember. Nothing may interfere with that. I hope this affair with P—— will not interfere with the success of my return engagement in New York. I have counteracted my compulsory oblivion by appearing at a P—— concert, and applauding my gloves to tatters. I thought of precipitating myself upon the platform, after the national fashion; but Y—— thought it best that I should restrain myself. I doubt not P—— smiled. By Heaven, he could afford to! He carried off all the money;—all in the town, I suspect. Confound him!



# *The Diary of*

March 2, New York,  
Hotel M——.

I CALLED upon a woman in this city yesterday afternoon, who has shown me almost oppressive courtesy since my first engagement.

I see her name frequently in the journals; indeed the names of people are all that I can read in this American language. I understand that her social place in America would be that of the nobility in Europe. Her beautiful house belongs to the best art, the most enormous bank account. Until yesterday I had never met her at close quarters. I do not know what I expected, but I called upon her fully prepared to conduct myself after the manner expected of me, however that might be.

It was our first meeting. I had a recollection of beautiful flowers from her, and notes; enthusiastic notes, that I could not read though she wrote them

## *Ca Musician*

in French. She received me in her most private apartments, in her most personal manner. She only refrained from throwing herself upon my breast. She is a most handsome, clear-eyed woman, with an indescribable manner of wisdom and knowledge that is common to American women.

She grasped my hands with ardor. I was about to put my arms around her when she froze my blood in my veins. Even now I am bewildered. My brain reeled with so sudden a transition. Her words were few and depressing. Her tone and manner were indescribably grand. "Sir", she said, "my husband—" and I was compelled to sit.—That a woman should thrust her husband upon a man at such a moment!

It appears that all of these ladies have husbands to whom they are entirely devoted.—Their conduct is a matter of nerves.

## *The Diary of*

This idiosyncrasy is bewildering to a foreigner, and it is dangerous. It was several minutes before I was able to understand the reason of her reminder; when it was made clear to me, I understood her demonstrations toward me to be the result of her nerves and of my genius.

Upon recovering myself, I enjoyed a delightful afternoon. I forgot that I was playing that night, and my call lengthened until nearly evening.

A great deal of my pleasure arose from a sense of continual surprise: my genius and her nerves, and her money, and her husband, and her mentality, and her children, and her children's children,—because, so help me Heaven! I learned that that lady was a grandmother.—All of these things so burst upon and overflowed me, that I spent the hours in a kind of mental maze. Withal, her virtue—though she made no special reference



## *Ca Musician*

to it—was of that well-appointed kind that reminds me of the Bank of England.

Without premeditation, the confidence being fairly surprised from me by her sympathetic temperament, I spoke to her of Mons. I told her how the *curé* had written me. I told her of Elise, the little child, the house and its baths, and all—all—

I was compelled to speak, because her listening was so entrancing. Presently she burst forth: “Herr X——, I did not *dream* that you were married.” Her enthusiasm startled me. I explained that I was not at all married, and was even about to explain Y——’s enterprise, when I recollected that that would be indiscreet. A sudden silence fell upon us. I could not quite comprehend her, but after a moment she smiled in her brilliant manner, and clasped my hand and said: “I *see!*—so foreign—oh, yes—all *right*—only—you must not *speak* of it.”

## The Diary of

I do not yet understand of what I am not to speak; but I am certain that the beautiful American woman knows what she is talking about, hence—"all right!"

I am becoming impatient of this tour. I believe that were it not that I have made the acquaintance of this enchanting *Americaine* I should throw up the remainder of my contract, forfeit all, and return to Mons. But I may go each day if I like to the lady, and speak of Mons, and of my plans, and of my hopes. She has told me that I may, but I must speak of it to no one else. I understand. Again:—"all right!"

March.

A DELIGHTFUL afternoon with the lady, Mrs. N——. I also met her husband—"all right". He worships her. She adores him. He does not know it, but I do, because she has told me so. It is obvious that she does not wish him to share her secret.

## *Ca Musician*

He said nothing about money. He is a good-looking man. He is courteous and quiet, and says little. His presence is reassuring. I like these people. I dare say a woman married to one of these men dares not forget her virtue, although he seems in no way to remind her of it. They are certainly people of atmosphere "all right"—I would like to know their language. I understand that it is the same as the English speak, but that is not obvious. Y—— has told me that Americans also are frequently faithful to their wives.—They are an interesting people.

March.

**T**O-DAY, I had occasion to cross the street six times. It cost me six dollars.



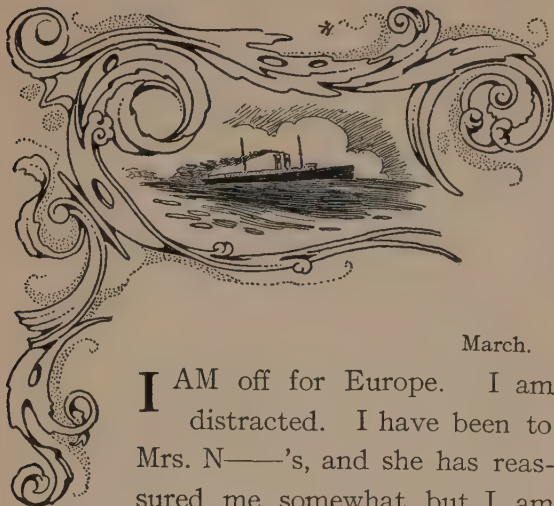
# *The Diary of*

March.

I UNDERSTAND that Y—— has dictated something on the subject of love for one of these American journals, and that it is supposed to emanate from me. If Y—— really knows what are my impressions of love, he certainly knows far more than I do. All right!



# Ca Musician



March.

**I** AM off for Europe. I am distracted. I have been to Mrs. N——'s, and she has reassured me somewhat, but I am distracted. I received a letter from the *curé* on yesterday's steamer. He wrote me that my little child was ill with some infant disease. I do not recall any such disease. They assure me that all children experience this—that I suffered thus. I do not recall that I did. I do not remember that I ever heard of it before; and it sounds formidable. I hurried to Mrs. N—— to learn the name of the most

## The Diary of

famous physician. She told me of certain remedies, and wished to prevent my visit to a physician. She tells me that her three children have been ill thus,—even her four months' old grandchild; but with all this reassurance I am none the less distracted,—because I had asked the chambermaid before seeing Mrs. N——, and she told me that under some circumstances little children become deaf or blind or something that I could not understand. I saw the physician. He wrote something down, and I have cabled it to the physician in Mons. This beautiful Mrs. N—— is an angel. She assures me that my little child will not die or become deaf or blind. I tremble so, that I could not play to-night if my life were at stake. Thank God we are sailing!

I shall certainly miss the wisdom of this charming *Americaine*. I am to write her about my little child, whom I shall call by her name. I have asked

## *Ca Musician*

Mrs. N——'s permission. She has given it. I would have asked her husband's, but she says that he will think whatever she thinks.

March.

AS I went aboard the ship, I received a letter from Elise which I here append:

"My dear Monsieur X——: My compliments and love to you. I salute you. My little baby is very well, but it has the measles. She is not too ill. She is a beautiful black baby like you. I am so happy. Monsieur, the *curé* tells me you are a very great person. I am frightened to think that I asked you to come here. I wonder if you will come to see us when you return to France? I go every day to the convent. I think you would be glad to have me. I do not neglect my baby that is so little and so black like you. I do right. I am

# *The Diary of*

very good. I thank you very much. I am sorry you are a great person."

The letter is clean, and nicely written, and I am enchanted.

I am ready to marry, to do anything on earth that Y—— wishes me to do. I am in the most amiable and joyous mood. I wish that I might have shown this letter to Mrs. N——.

All right.

April.

ON board S.S. Touraine. Y—— has disclosed a startling purpose. Without consultation with me, taking me at my word, he has made some arrangement for a marriage between me and the Countess A——. She is a Budapest woman. I recall her altogether not unpleasantly.

I do not know whether to consent or to refuse to consummate Y——'s plan.

He has cabled to the Countess to join



## *Our Musician*

us in Havre, and he communicated in my name. He intimates that he addressed her warmly. This seems to me to be somewhat exceeding his managerial office; however, Y—— is fast becoming more than a manager to me. I continually remember the many kind offices he has done for me at times when opposition would have destroyed me and my career, and I delight to please him.

He urges me to close with the Countess A—— upon my arrival in France. I suspect that he has seized the occasion of my good nature and entire satisfaction with life and the world, to accomplish his purpose of an enterprising advertisement for next season. He declares that if I agree to this, the marriage may take place immediately in England;—thus avoiding official details in France, and thus maintaining secrecy till sometime in the summer,—just before that time when the incident will become most valuable.

## *The Diary of*

It seems churlish to oppose him in a trivial matter, when he conforms to my desires in so many important details.

I will agree to this in case he makes his arrangements so that I am not detained from Mons. I will agree to a delay of twenty-four hours to please Y——; but no longer. Then to Mons.

S.S. La Touraine.

ONLY two days of the trip gone. The time ahead seems interminable. I am trying to recall the Countess A——'s characteristics. It is sometime since I saw her. She does credit to Y——'s acumen,—a woman by no means of any importance, and titled, and considerably older than I, and her time fully occupied with her own pursuits. Y—— knows well enough that I would undertake no personal obligations. It is simply a matter of business, like any other matter. However, it seems to me that it is of some im-

## *Ca Musician*

portance that this should be perfectly understood. Y—— assures me that it will be; he will attend to that. He also assures me that a woman like the Countess would resent any demands on her as well.

Let Y—— manage. Management is his business, not mine.

S.S.

**I** CANNOT be entirely easy in my mind until I have seen for myself that Mrs. N——'s representations were correct, and that nothing dreadful has been the result of the disease.

I wish I might have heard before sailing if the prescriptions cabled by me were efficacious. However, I will regard no news as good news.

I shall give myself a week in Mons. Not a day less; after that I will go to see my mother. I shall have to join the Countess A—— sometime in August, I fancy, if I maintain Y——'s program.

# *The Diary of*

I shall wish to see Josef. I am amazed that I have not already written him of my serious interests in Mons. I have certainly thought of little else.

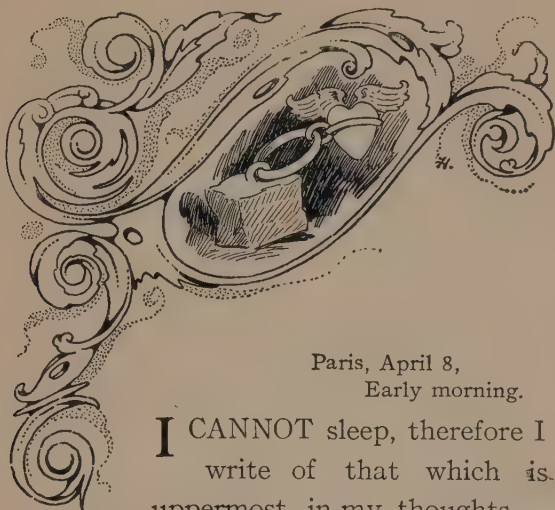
Havre, April 7.

COUNTESS A—— joined us here. She was as blithe as an extremely heavy person can well be. I believe Y—— must have completed arrangements, because there seemed to be an understanding between us when we met. I let it go thus. We leave for England this afternoon. To-night I leave England for Paris. Three days hence I shall be in Mons.

I am beside myself with joy when I think of it. My coming is not suspected.



# *Ca Musician*



Paris, April 8,  
Early morning.

**I** CANNOT sleep, therefore I write of that which is uppermost in my thoughts,—the little two at Mons. I shall be there to-morrow night. I shall transact some business as soon as it is late enough for other people to be about, and shall get off as quickly as possible.

Married to the Countess late afternoon, yesterday—Dover. Just in time to get boat back. Some unpleasantness arose. It occurs to me that Y—— must have bungled matters. I rushed aboard the

# *The Diary of*

boat, and left them to make adjustments. Y—— will tell her what to expect, I suppose, since it is his affair.

I understand that the trouble was over my immediate departure.

She understood that I would have to be elsewhere almost at once, but probably not so entirely at once. I fear she is going to be troublesome. So mature a woman should exercise some judgment. I suppose she knows why she is willing to marry me: I do not; but a well-born woman is an inexplicable creature. High-born reasons are beyond ordinary interpretation.

I shall now be able to get my coffee, and then go about my business.

Afternoon.

**E**N route for Mons.



# *The Musician*

Mons, Midnight.

**A**M far too happy to sleep. Arrived promptly to find myself all unexpected.

I know not how to record my emotions that are inspired by Elise; and the emotions inspired by this little child are still more indescribable.

I entered the house, and found no one below. It was late afternoon when I arrived. I do not know why I did not call out: I felt as if there should be no startling sounds in that house. My heart fluttered like a bird's. I was afraid that I should weep hysterically. I went above, and Elise and the little child were beside the open fire. It was a beautiful moment to me.

I could not speak. When I opened my arms, it was for Elise as well as for the child. It was involuntary, and I had lost all memory of the uncouth, brown-armed girl of the fields that I had

## *The Diary of*

seen before. Had I found her as I left her, yet I believe I should have forgotten any ungraceful appearance. As it was, I saw a small girl, half German in type, wholly French in alertness of expression, dressed in a sober gown. She has the fairest hair, the gentlest mouth, and her whole being seemed to speak of devotion and kindness and good feeling, and above all she looked the mother of my child. I felt my youth going from me in that moment, and a robust manhood taking its place.

For the first time since his death, I am able to speak my father's name as I write here now. Before this, it has killed me even to think upon my father. I believe from this moment I shall be able to endure both joy and sorrow with less destruction of moral force. My dear father,—for one clasp of his hand!

Neither Elise nor I could speak for some moments, and even after that we



## La Musician

said but little. My little child does not know me. We sat for a very long time clasping each other's hands. Later we went below and she got me some supper. I carried the little child about behind her, while she worked. It will stay in my arms, and not cry.

I learn that it never cries—laughs always. It is black-eyed, with hair like an Indian's, and to me most beautiful.

I am troubled. The entire aspect of the world is changed to me. I do not know if I have done right. Now that I have beheld this girl, I have an instinctive feeling that it is she whom I should have married. If so, my situation is an unpleasant one.

The *curé* heard of my arrival, and visited us while we supped. I expressed my gratitude for the care he has so evidently given to my household.

Elise has applied herself to her own development in a most wonderful manner.

## *The Diary of*

She can read and she can write. Her hands are large but well shaped, and are no longer red and coarse. Obviously she has taken great pains with her personal appearance—and all, I believe, with a most conscientious purpose.

The result is too excellent to belong to other motives. She walks flat-footed, because of her lifetime habit of wooden shoes, but time will cure that. However, the strangest point in this phenomenon is, had I found her as I left her, and as I have always thought of her, I should have found her indispensable to my happiness. I am experiencing a most remarkable, a most inexplicable emotion. It is joy to me only to know that she is in the house. She and this little child are as inseparable in my thoughts now that I have actually realized them together, as it is possible for them to be.

I fear I have cause for great anxiety. Things that she has said to-night have

## *Ca Musician*

given me reason for distraction. It is her modesty of feeling and aspiration that has wrought this change in my comprehension. As a matter of fact, her simple expressions have revealed to me that there is a distinction of genius that is superior even to the distinction of birth; and doubtless it is this that has made many women kind.

I might have known this if I had thought of it at all, at any time. I believe that it largely explains the reason why an aristocrat like the Countess A—— has married me. If it be true that there is any distinction conferred upon any woman by being my wife, then it is this girl here in Mons,—my child's mother,—who should be in that place—and, by God! it is she who shall be there, marriage or no marriage!

As I think upon this complication I am inclined to lose my head with irritation; but it is not the time for that, if I

## The Diary of

am to serve those two who are all mine. I will take charge of my affairs now myself, and get out of the complication under any circumstances. Management of this sort is certainly not Y——'s forte. In the first place, I see clearly that a woman who would enter into an arrangement such as our marriage, after the fashion of the Countess, has no heart to crush. What she suffers will be in her temper, or maybe in her kind of pride. *Voilà!* she must suffer. I shall suffer in the knowledge of my absurd situation, and in its injustice to others, and in my efforts to get out of it—which I shall certainly do. Elise and my child shall suffer not at all. Elise knows nothing of these things. She makes no demands. I am altogether a great person to her, and she could not approach the situation even in her imagination; so let it be until I have adjusted matters.

I shall not live with the Countess A——.

## *Ca Musician*

I fancy I shall have to let matters drift, and permit the marriage to be announced as Y—— has planned; and as soon after as possible I shall take measures to break the bond.

I shall leave the means of settlement to the Countess, and should she refuse to act, I myself will take action.

The Countess A—— is an exceedingly heavy person with an exceedingly light lover in Budapest.

As I review the situation, and think that any fancied dignity attaches to the position of my wife, I cannot forbear to smile.

I left this, the only home I shall ever know, long enough to visit the doctor in the town of Mons. I could not be tranquil till I had learned of my family's physical condition. My little gipsy is as sound as a nut, possessing the constitution of two well-made peasants. As for Elise: I learn that she is to live one

# The Diary of

hundred years. *Sláva!* a long life! It shall be an entirely happy one, full to the top of all the joy that comfortable means and constant devotion can give. My baby has a face like an angel's, an instep like an Arab's, the constitution of a peasant, the temper of her mother! What more can I desire? And I am going to be like an American husband.

How surprised Y—— will be!

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THE END

# Ca Musician



*Finis.*













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The diary of a musician.

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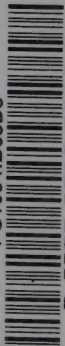
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The diary of a musician  
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